

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT
For
Community Development Block Grant Urban County Partnership
Fiscal Year 2019-2020
County of Santa Barbara

Introduction

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awards Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program funds annually to County of Santa Barbara Urban County Partnership for the development of viable urban communities, for providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income. The County Community Services Department (CSD), Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is the lead agency for the CDBG Urban County Partnership, which includes the County and the cities of Buellton, Carpinteria, and Solvang.

In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, on March 27, 2020, the United States Congress enacted the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act to provide economic relief and assistance. The CARES Act included special allocations of CDBG funds, known as CDBG-CV.

Santa Barbara County has been awarded \$1,906,404 in CDBG-CV funds through the U.S. Department of Urban Development (HUD) to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus. The first allocation of that award (“CDBG-CV1”) was received by the County in September 2020, in the amount of \$741,038 and was included in a 2019 Substantial Amendment submitted to HUD in July 2020. The second allocation (“CDBG-CV3”), in the amount of \$1,165,366, is included in this subsequent Substantial Amendment to the 2019 Action Plan.

Santa Barbara County, Community Services Department, Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD) oversees HUD CDBG entitlement funding and, as program administrator, intends to utilize the CDBG-CV funding to continue to provide emergency rent assistance to qualifying county residents in accordance with 24 CFR 570.207(b)(4), which permits emergency grant payments made over a period of up to three consecutive months to the provider of housing on behalf of an individual or family. Up to twenty percent (20%) of the funds will be used by the County for administration and a portion of the funds will be used for Activity Delivery Costs.

HUD requires that the proposed uses of federal funds be included in an Action Plan or substantial amendment to an Action Plan and made available to the public for input prior to the public meeting at which the County Board of Supervisors (Board) approves the Action Plan and funding awards. The CARES Act provides for a 5-day expedited public comment period when amending a 2019 or 2020 Annual Action Plan relating to the CARES Act. The County’s Citizen Participation Plan also provides for an expedited public notice period in cases of a declared disaster, whereas the County may reduce the 30-day comment period in accordance with the guidance put forth by HUD in the Federal Register Notice pertaining to the disaster. In such instance of a declared disaster, public notice of any plan amendment may be reasonably reduced to comply with guidance put forth by HUD in the Federal Register Notice pertaining to the disaster.

Public Comment Period

A public notice was published in local newspapers and on the County's website at www.countyofsb.org/housing five (5) days prior to the scheduled County Administrative Public Hearing regarding the draft Urban County Partnership FY 2019-20 Annual Action Plan Substantial Amendment. This substantial Action Plan amendment also was available for public review on the County's website at www.countyofsb.org/housing and at <https://santabarbara.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx#current>.

The public may provide comments on this substantial Action Plan amendment in writing by 4:00 p.m. on December 14 to County CSD by mail to, 123 E. Anapamu St, Suite 202, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, or e-mailed to HCD@co.santa-barbara.ca.us. The public also is invited to address the Board directly during the public meeting by email or phone. Follow the directions posted at <https://www.countyofsb.org/ceo/cob.sbc>. The Board will consider all public comments before taking action on HCD recommendations to approve the Substantial Action Plan Amendment at the public meeting on December 15, 2020.

Amendment to FY 2019-2020 Action Plan

The County Board of Supervisors, at its December 15, 2020 hearing, determined that an Urgent Need exists in Santa Barbara County due to the effects of COVID-19 and that the uses of Community Development Block Grant – Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus are designed to address the Urgent Need; and that the Emergency Rent Assistance Program (ERAP) is designed to alleviate existing conditions; that those existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community and are of recent origin or recently became urgent; and that the County is unable to finance the activity on its own, and that other sources of funds are not available.

The Action Plan for FY 2019-2020 is being amended to award \$1,906,404 in CDBG-CV funds to implement a rent assistance program for qualifying households who lost income or employment due to COVID-19 as approved by the County Board of Supervisors.