



TO: Biden Administration Transition Team

FROM: The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Coalition

DATE: December 1, 2020

RE: Support for Renewed Investment in the CDBG Program

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Coalition encompasses national organizations working to improve rural, suburban, and urban areas and the lives of low- and moderate-income people including women, youth, families, and communities of color through programs, services, education, and advocacy. We stand ready to work with the Biden Administration to help communities recover from the coronavirus pandemic and address vital unmet infrastructure, affordable housing, economic development, and public services needs in communities using the CDBG program.

As the incoming administration looks to address the major challenges of our nation, we welcome key federal investments which help vulnerable populations and distressed communities. We support as a part of the Biden Administration's "Build Back Better" platform robust federal aid in local projects and services through the CDBG program. CDBG is one of the most important federal resources for communities to respond to current and emerging community development needs, including business and job creation, development of affordable housing, improvement of existing housing stock, the delivery of vital services, and the development of important infrastructure improvements.

CDBG has a proven record of supporting locally led projects in housing, infrastructure, economic development, and public services.

CDBG Accomplishments Since FY2005

- **455,000** economic development related jobs created/retained since FY2005
- **1.6 million** households provided with decent, safe, affordable housing since FY2005
- **51.5 million** people assisted through infrastructure improvements since FY2005
- **160 million** people assisted through public services since FY2005

According to [HUD data between FY2005 to FY2020](#), the program provided 1.6 million households with affordable housing, and created and retained nearly 455,000 jobs. CDBG also supported 160 million people in public service activities during this period with 619,000 households benefitting from housing-related assistance. The program has made significant contributions to infrastructure as well aiding 51.5 million persons through community facilities, utilities, and related developments since 2005. Through local public/private partnerships, CDBG funds are leveraged to

attract investment and additional resources. Every \$1.00 of CDBG attracts another \$4.09 in private/public funds.

Though CDBG has direct and meaningful impact, the program remains significantly underfunded to address longstanding and critical local needs. The [2019 CDBG Coalition National Report](#) details how annual spending has lagged behind earlier investments in the program. Throughout its history, CDBG

has never been able to meet its initial funding amount of \$2.4 billion in 1975 when adjusted for inflation. Its highest-ever annual appropriation amount was \$4.4 billion in FY2001. Since then, spending has declined tremendously even with the latest annual funding reaching \$3.3 billion in FY19 and \$3.425 billion in FY20. Also featured in the report is a survey of state and local grantees which found that requests for funds consistently outweigh available grant dollars. Overall, annual funds have not kept up with the rising demands and costs of maintenance to roads, utility replacements, housing repairs, and similar needs shared by urban and rural communities alike. We ask you to support robust funding for CDBG in the Biden Administration's FY22 budget request to Congress.

We also ask you to include funding for CDBG in future infrastructure investments and provide additional funding to CDBG to help communities address the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. State and local governments have effectively used the CDBG CARES Act funding to provide working capital to small businesses, rent/mortgage/utility assistance to families impacted economically by the pandemic, and funds to food banks and homeless shelters, to name a few.

CDBG remains a prime resource for state and local governments to improve quality of life and economic outcomes for their residents. Further investment would mean better infrastructure, more jobs, increased access to key services, and additional units of affordable housing. CDBG provides an important and tested program to rebuilding our nation and promoting people where they live.

We respectfully request a meeting with the Biden Transition Team to introduce the CDBG Coalition, our work, and our priorities. Please reach out to Vicki Watson at vwatson@ncdaonline.org or Josh Shumaker at jshumaker@coscda.org to schedule the meeting.

We look forward to working with the Biden Administration to build healthy, viable communities through increased CDBG investment.

Sincerely,

American Library Association
American Planning Association
Boys and Girls Clubs of America
Council of Large Public Housing Authorities
Council of State Community Development Agencies
Enterprise Community Partners
Feeding America
Habitat for Humanity International
Heartland Alliance
Housing Assistance Council
International Code Council
International Economic Development Council
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
National Association for County Community and Economic Development
National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders
National Association of Counties
National Association of Development Organizations
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
National Association of Local Housing Finance Agencies

National Association of Regional Councils
National Community Development Association
National League of Cities
National Main Street Center
National NeighborWorks Association
National Recreation and Park Association
National Rural Water Association
Rebuilding Together
Rural Community Assistance Partnership
The Trust for Public Land
U.S. Conference of Mayors
YWCA USA

ABOUT:

The CDBG Coalition consists of 31 national organizations representing local elected officials, housing and community development professionals, and a wide array of non-profit organizations. The Coalition is dedicated to the preservation of the CDBG program and works to increase awareness of the program and the need for increased program funding.