

AGENCY NAME: Town of Amherst
 AGENCY ADDRESS: 4 Boltwood Avenue, Amherst, MA 01002
 AGENCY PHONE NO: (413) 259 - 3040 CONTACT PERSON: David Ziomek
 2011 CDBG REQUEST: \$325,000.00

Cover Sheet – Non-Social Service Activity

1. Project Name – *Affordable Housing Land Purchase*
2. Project Description (1-2 sentences)
The Town proposes to purchase a parcel of land on West Street for affordable housing purposes. Preliminary studies by the Planning Department indicate that there is buildable space for housing on the site.
3. Project Location:
West Street within the Pomeroy Village Center.
4. Budget Request
\$325,000.
5. Type of Activity (check one):
 - Rehabilitation
 - Acquisition*
 - Demolition/clearance
 - Infrastructure
 - Public Facility
 - Architectural Barrier Removal
 - Other – please explain
6. Demonstrate Consistency with Community Development Strategy –
The Community Development Strategy identifies affordable housing as a priority as reflected in the master plan.
7. Demonstrate Consistency with Sustainable Development Principles
Sustainable Development Principle 1: Support the revitalization of city and town centers and neighborhoods by promoting development that is compact, conserves land, protects historic resources, and integrates uses. The property is in the Pomeroy Lane Village center and so this project promotes compact development and conserves land.
8. Demonstrate Consistency with Target Area requirements:
The development of Housing on this parcel would be consistent with development in a Village Center: the Pomeroy Lane Village Center.

9. National Objective

Benefit to low- and moderate-income persons

Estimate the number of low- and moderate-income persons to benefit from the Project:

To be determined, but all beneficiaries will meet low- and moderate-income guidelines.

Total number of individuals served

To be determined

Total Low/Mod individuals served

To be determined

Please submit responses to the following questions:

Project Name: *Land Purchase for Affordable Housing*

Project Location: *West Street*

Census Block Group: *25-015-820801-2*

A. Please describe in full the project for which you are requesting funding:

Include information on the number of individuals or families to be served and who they are, i.e. disabled, low-income, homeless, etc.

The Town is requesting funding to purchase a parcel of land to be reserved for affordable housing purposes. The Town has identified this site as a possible location upon which to construct affordable housing. Once purchased, the Planning Department will evaluate the site to determine the most likely type of affordable housing, for example, and enhanced single room occupancy facility, affordable condos, affordable rental housing, etc. Though there are considerable wetlands on the site, the Planning Department has already determined that there is sufficient land upon which to build. The Town, in this application, is also applying for funds to hire a consultant to engage in a broad-based market study to determine the affordable housing needs of the community. Planning staff will then use the market survey and site assessment to determine the most effect approach to constructing affordable housing on this site. The number of individuals or families that can be housed has yet to be determined. The Town has five years upon which to construct housing.

B. What is the community's need for the proposed project/program?

Define the need or problem to be addressed by the proposed project. Explain why the project is important. Provide evidence of the severity of the need or problem. Who are the affected population and why is this population presently underserved or not served?

As documented in the 2003 update to the Affordable Housing Plan, there continues to be considerable need for affordable housing for individuals and families. For example, the Amherst Housing Authority had a list of over 200 households (single individuals and families) applying for 11 units of rental housing at their Main Street development.

C. Community Involvement:

What process was used to select this particular project? How was the process responsive to expressed community need?

This project was chosen based on continual review of land that may be available for the development of affordable housing. In most cases, the asking price for available land is far greater than the appraised value and therefore purchase is not possible. Due to the

extent of wetlands and the fact that the parcel has been on the market for several years, Planning Staff believe it will be able to purchase the parcel at a reasonable cost. The Housing Partnership/Fair Housing Committee and the Committee on Homelessness continue to express the need for additional affordable housing both for low- and moderate-income individuals and families and homeless individuals and families.

Define the process that will be used to maintain involvement of the project beneficiaries in the implementation of the project.

The low- and moderate-income community, Town Boards and Committees, and others will be involved in the site assessment and market survey. Both will be presented at public hearings to receive comment from all interested parties.

D. Project Feasibility

The project impact will be evaluated upon the extent to which the response meets the following criteria:

1. Describe what evidence exists to show that the community at large or project beneficiaries will use the project. Include documentation of demand for the activity through summary descriptions of surveys, inquiries, waiting lists or past participation.

As stated above, over 200 individuals and families applied for 11 units of Amherst Housing Authority rental housing.

2. If applicable, describe and document the availability and source of matching or other funds needed to complete the project.

At this point there are no matching funds available for purchase.

3. Identify the roles and responsibilities of all personnel involved in the project as well as internal controls.

Planning Staff will be responsible for all predevelopment assessment that will include procurement, complying with CDBG regulations, zoning requirements, wetland review, etc.

4. Citing past accomplishments, document that the agency has the necessary past expertise to conduct the activity and has successfully completed past activities in a timely manner.

Planning staff has considerable experience in purchasing land for conservation and other purposes, and pre-development assessment of property.

Please submit a program budget that includes all sources of revenue and all expenses.

The budget consists only of the acquisition cost: \$325,000.

5. Please submit a time line with milestones, including a start and end date that demonstrates that this project is feasible (will be complete) within 18 months.

The Town will sign an option to purchase agreement with the owner prior to the submission of the application defining the terms of a purchase and sale agreement. Terms will include a review of zoning status, environmental review, 21E environmental assessment, sale price, redetermination of wetlands, etc. The Town and the owner will then sign a purchase and sale agreement defining the terms of the sale, specifically that it will be complete prior to the 18 month deadline.

E. Impact

Describe the impact the activity will have on the specifically identified needs. What measurable improvements will result from the activity? How much of the need will be addressed? Define the direct and indirect outcomes that will result from the project. Identify quantitative and qualitative measures to determine that the outcomes are achieved.

This will make a small, but significant contribution to increasing the availability of affordable housing in Amherst and will contribute to the continued effort by the Town to provide housing for its most vulnerable citizens.

F. Evaluation

Goals & Assessments: Please explain your short-term goals and long-term goals. Describe the changes in the target population that indicate the program's success. How will these changes be measured? Will anticipated changes affect the municipality's responsibility to this target population? How will the impact of this service on individual clients be tracked over time? Will there be additional beneficiaries? Will this service enable clients to become self-sufficient? How is this service linked to other human/social service programs in the community?

The Town's long-term goals, identified in the Master Plan and Community Development Strategy, are to significantly increase the availability of affordable housing for low-and moderate-income households. This will only happen if the Town continues to locate land and existing dwellings for that purpose.

G. Agency Information

Please provide an overview of your organization, including length of time in existence, experience in successfully conducting activities for which funding is being sought, and skills and current services that reflect capacity for success.

The Town offers high level government services, quality education, support for open space and agriculture, promotion of economic development, and respect for its history. Town government has been in existence for decades, with numerous departments and citizen boards and committees all working toward common goals that benefit its citizens and the community. Currently, Amherst has professional staff in all of its departments, in particular its Accounting, Conservation, Planning, and Public Works Departments who commonly work with consultants and property owners to manage and develop such projects as land acquisition, feasibility studies and assessments, development of engineering specifications, and construction projects ranging from public infrastructure to affordable housing. Town staff is competent with procurement regulations, balancing budgets, and efficiently managing contracts so that deliverables are received on time. The Office of Conservation and Development, who will be working closely with the property owner and other interested parties to purchase the property, is the same staff who

- *managed and coordinated the Master Planning Process, which involved a two-year, multiphase contract for over \$200,000;*
- *worked with various boards and committees to initiate the development of Olympia Drive, a 40-unit, multi-million dollar affordable housing project;*
- *worked with consultants to conduct a build out analysis for the community in 2002; and commonly work with appraisers and consultants to develop feasibility studies, architectural plans and cost estimates for various projects.*