

Twenty Cities and Towns Benefit from the Community Development Block Grant Program

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By: Providence American Staff Writer

Providence -- Governor Gina M. Raimondo joined the Rhode Island Executive Office of Commerce and the Office of Housing and Community Development today to announce that 20 Rhode Island cities and towns will receive \$5 million in grants from the 2015 Rhode Island Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The goal of the CDBG program is to enhance communities by providing decent housing, expanding economic opportunity and creating suitable living environments, primarily for low and moderate income families.

Each year the State of Rhode Island receives an allocation of CDBG funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be distributed to eligible Rhode Island communities. The grants are given to municipalities through Rhode Island Housing, which use the funds to improve neighborhoods and build stronger communities. This year, priority was given to proposals designed to expand the supply of housing available to low and moderate income families and support economic development in distressed neighborhoods.

These federal funds more than \$5 million in total represent a substantial, forward-looking investment in our communities across our state, Governor Raimondo said. With these grants, HUD makes it possible for our cities and towns to expand the availability of affordable and safe housing, grow economic opportunity, and create strong, healthy neighborhoods where Rhode Island families and businesses can thrive.

I am proud to have worked to secure funding for the CDBG program, which continues to help Rhode Island communities make locally driven economic development and other infrastructure investments that are unique to their needs. By responsibly combining these federal funds with local resources, cities and towns can help businesses spur economic development and create jobs. I will continue working to secure this funding and support these targeted investments to benefit Rhode Island, said U.S. Senator Jack Reed, a senior member of the Senate Banking Committee, which has jurisdiction over CDBG, and the Ranking Member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD), which appropriates funds for the program.

These funds will provide an important boost for Rhode Island communities looking to add affordable housing, create jobs, and grow the local economy, said Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, who has fought against attempts to reduce or eliminate funding for the CDBG program. I am proud to join with Senator Reed and Congressmen Langevin and Cicilline to fight for this funding and to see it pay off for Rhode Islanders.

Affordable housing is the foundation upon which Rhode Islanders can build successful, independent, and fulfilling lives, said Congressman Jim Langevin. More families will have a place to call home thanks to this infusion of federal funds, opening up new opportunities and supporting local economies, and the result will be stronger, more vibrant communities.

Investments in rebuilding our infrastructure, expanding affordable housing, and strengthening our neighborhoods are key to growing the Rhode Island economy. I was proud to advocate for significant CDBG funding in the federal budget, and I am delighted that we are bringing back \$5 million in CDBG funding today, said Congressman David Cicilline, who requested \$3.3 billion for CDBG in Fiscal Year 2016. I look forward to continuing to work with leaders across our state to ensure these resources are implemented in a way that best strengthens our economic potential.

Communities such as West Warwick and Westerly are receiving allocations to support a variety of activities ranging from infrastructure to housing, said Secretary of Commerce Stefan Pryor. The investment of these resources will stimulate economic development and help revitalize our communities.

A breakdown of the grants by general category, dollar amount and percent of the total award are as follows:

Housing Rehabilitation	\$691,044	13.78%
Housing Projects	\$1,907,505	38.03%
Public Facilities Improvements	\$1,240,445	24.73%
Economic Development	\$79,500	1.59%
Public Services	\$707,480	14.11%
Administration and Planning	\$389,500	7.77%

Below is a listing of the municipalities and the grant amount they received:

Bristol	\$223,750
Burrillville	\$711,500
Central Falls	\$255,000
Coventry	\$506,816
Cumberland	\$20,000

East Greenwich \$141,005
Foster \$9,500
Hopkinton \$405,872
Jamestown \$109,000
Johnston \$37,500
Middletown \$357,700
Newport \$313,000
North Providence \$183,500
Portsmouth \$52,500
Richmond \$44,851
Smithfield \$690,000
South Kingstown \$171,938
Tiverton \$25,000
Westerly \$112,500
West Warwick \$360,000
Consolidated Homeless Funds \$284,542

Total: \$5,015,474