

# Town of Malden

## CDBG Public Hearing

### Questions & Answers

#### May 20, 2021

- 1. What is CDBG?** The Community Development Block Grant program is funded by the US Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) to benefit low- and moderate-income residents through city and county projects. CDBG grants to entities in Whitman County are administered through the Washington State Department of Commerce. There are several different kinds of grants, but Malden will be applying for two General Purpose grants, one for construction and one for planning.
- 2. What can these particular funds be used for?** The state has prioritized its general purpose grants for sewer, water and transportation activities that address public health and safety, community facilities, economic development, affordable housing (but NOT new housing construction), and certain planning activities. Funds CANNOT be used to construct government buildings, such as town offices, maintenance shop, or a post office.
- 3. What projects does the town want to have considered for CDBG funding?** For the General Purpose construction grant application, the town is requesting the maximum \$900,000 toward the cost of building a fire station, which will include 4 vehicle bays, work space for public safety vehicles and equipment maintenance, public safety equipment and supply storage, restrooms and shower, a small kitchen, and a training room. For the planning grant application, we are requesting the maximum \$30,000 to help fund a comprehensive plan for building an in-town trail system that connects to the GART trailhead, the area around the trailhead, an RV park, and a new town park. We believe this connected outdoor recreation system will bring economic benefits to the town, as well as providing beautiful outdoor spaces and recreation opportunities for everyone living in and visiting Malden.
- 4. Why a fire station? Don't we need a library and food pantry first, or funding for our water and sewer systems?** The town has already received funding for water system improvements from the state (\$3.7 million from Public Works) and has multiple requests submitted for federal funding for a new sewer system. Given the allowed activities for the general purpose grant, community facilities most meets our needs. The other community facility, the community center (which will also house the library and food pantry), has other funding sources available (contributions from private, corporate, and foundation donors). These sources will not require the town to pay a prevailing wage for construction; however, both CDBG funds and insurance proceeds will require that prevailing wages be paid. Were we to use any portion of CDBG or insurance funds to build

the community center, prevailing wages must be paid for all construction activities. Another reason for submitting the fire station facility is that we are still almost constantly under threat of another wildfire event. We need to be able to defend the town from fire. A new station and upgraded equipment, together with extended water service and additional hydrants as well as creating a defensible fire barrier around the town will put us in the best position to do that. In addition, each resident taking steps to minimize the spread of wildfire around their home and outbuildings will also help us prevent another devastating fire event in Malden. Simply put, a fire station is a critical need that is best met with government grant funding.

5. **Why do we need another comprehensive plan?** If funded, the \$30,000 from this grant will be used to expand the scope of work with SCJ Alliance to include a comprehensive outdoor plan for trails, recreation, and green spaces. The current plan covers housing, infrastructure, business district, and roadways. We want to not only provide great, safe spaces for children to play and our residents to enjoy their town, but also to create outdoor recreation that entices visitors and new residents. We also want to maximize the GART trailhead and use this as an opportunity to spur community and economic development (café, coffee shop, laundromat, campground, small convenience store, bike rental business, etc.).
6. **If you have already decided what you are submitting, why are we here?** The purpose of this hearing is to let residents know the town is applying for two CDBG grants, what projects we are submitting for funding consideration, and to answer any questions you may have about those projects, the application process, or the community's needs in general. A copy of the final applications will be made available on the town's website by June 4 for residents to review if desired and a link to the recording from this hearing will also be available on the town website by May 27.
7. **Is there a cost to the town to apply?** The town will have to pay for any required environmental or cultural resource reviews related to the proposed construction site. We estimate these reviews will cost approximately \$5500 and this will be paid with FEMA public assistance funds. The grant manager hired by the LTRO will complete the application and the town's mayor and construction manager will help oversee the construction.
8. **If funded, how much will the town receive?** Each application will request the maximum amount which is \$900,000 for the general purpose construction application and \$30,000 for the planning application. If funded, the amounts granted may not be the full amounts requested.
9. **The building will also have town offices – how can you use this grant to pay for that space?** We will pro-rate the application as allowed by the state to only cover costs associated with allowable construction (all space related to the fire station and public safety training).

- 10. How will you pay for the town offices and shop?** We will use insurance proceeds.
- 11. How much will this building cost?** Total construction cost is not yet known; however, the deadline to apply for CDBG grants is June 2 and we do not want to miss this opportunity to secure funds for the building. We will have preliminary budget information on the building before the June 2 deadline.
- 12. When will we know if Malden received the grants?** Recipients will be announced in September, along with the amounts granted.
- 13. When will construction start and when will it be finished?** If funded, we are working to have construction start this fall, with an anticipated completion of early Spring 2022.
- 14. Where can I send questions and comments about these projects?**

Questions, complaints, or grievances about the CDBG application process must be submitted in writing using one of the following methods:

- delivered to Town Hall (located at 204 W. Moreland) on Tuesdays or Thursdays between 9am and 4pm
- dropped through the mail slot at Town Hall
- via U.S. mail (Town of Malden, PO Box 248, Malden, WA 99149)
- send an email to [townofmaldenwa@gmail.com](mailto:townofmaldenwa@gmail.com)

If you are unable to write or email your comments, you may stop by in person (or call 509-569-3771) and talk to Mayor Dan Harwood or Micki Harnois, Town Clerk.

**ALL CDBG RELATED COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES MUST BE RECEIVED OR POSTMARKED BY 5:00 PM ON FRIDAY, MAY 28, 2021.** A written response to your questions, complaints, or grievances will be sent to you within 15 working days where practicable. Please include your name and mailing address. A copy of the town's grievance procedure can be found at [maldenwa.org](http://maldenwa.org).

