



City of New Bedford
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

City of New Bedford
Office of the Mayor
Contact: Elizabeth Treadup
(508) 979-1410
etreadup@newbedford-ma.gov

Date: March 18, 2014
For Immediate Release

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Mayor Mitchell Announces Availability of FY 2014 Draft Action Plan for Federal Housing and Community Development Programs

New Bedford, Massachusetts – New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell has released the *Fiscal Year 2014 Draft Action Plan* outlining how the City plans to use its share of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding totaling \$2,785,250 and \$219,846 in Emergency Solutions Grant Program funding.

The *Draft Action Plan* outlines the City's proposed allocation of CDBG and ESG funds to some 30 community-based organizations and city departments that provide housing, economic development, public services and infrastructure improvements to assist in addressing New Bedford's needs. The draft being released today is a preliminary version of the final *2014 Action Plan*, subject to approval by the City Council. The CDBG and ESG programs are administered through the City's Office of Housing and Community Development.

Mayor Mitchell said, "These programs provide the City of New Bedford with critical funding to address a wide array of community needs around housing, infrastructure, public facilities, and community-based services. CDBG funds are leveraged to attract businesses and investment, revitalize neighborhoods, advance infrastructure projects, and support programs for low to moderate income residents."

In New Bedford, CDBG funding continues to be the cornerstone of neighborhood revitalization initiatives, while providing precious funding to those individuals and families that demonstrate the greatest need.

Among the facilities and infrastructure projects proposed to be funded with the FY 14 federal allocation are the Mariner's Home rehabilitation, renovations to the new site of the Sister Rose House homeless shelter, park and playground improvements, and vacant lot restoration throughout the city.

Under the Public Services category, the 2014 Draft Action Plan proposes to fund a variety of vital programs offered by numerous community based organizations such as

the Dream Out Loud Center for the Arts, the Immigrant's Assistance Center, Art Therapy, Team Builders, Coastline Elderly Services, the United Way Hunger Commission, and more. Key City-based services like ESOL education, Senior Center programs, and the Seasonal Training and Employment Program for youth (STEP) are also funded with these dollars.

CDBG likewise funds a number of crucial housing rehabilitation programs, including the Emergency Repair Grant Program. Due to the overwhelming response to the program since it was introduced, Mayor Mitchell has proposed a significant increase in the money available to the program to allow more qualified homeowners access to the \$8,000 grants it offers for necessary home repairs such as new roofs and heating systems.

In addition to the CDBG allocation, the mayor announced \$219,846 in proposed ESG awards to organizations such as Catholic Social Services, PACE, and the Women's Center to administer programs to prevent homelessness, to assist with Emergency Shelter operations, and to rapidly re-house those individuals and families that are faced with homelessness.

The CDBG and ESG program, administered locally through the Office of Housing and Community Development, initiates public input and comment each year through a series of public meetings to engage the community in the process of planning projects and to solicit funding applications from a variety of organizations to assist in addressing the needs of low and moderate income residents. The *Draft Action Plan* reflects the needs of the community as expressed through this public engagement and application process. It will be available for the public to comment on for 30 days, after which a final version will be submitted, with comments, to the City Council for adoption.

The *Fiscal Year 2014 Draft Action Plan* is available in hard copy at the Office of Housing and Community Development, 608 Pleasant Street, New Bedford; at all New Bedford Free Public Library branches; at the City Clerk's Office, 133 William Street, New Bedford; and online at www.newbedford-ma.gov. For more information call the Office of Housing and Community Development at (508) 979-1500.

###

Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/CityofNewBedford and
Twitter [www.twitter.com/NewBedford MA!](http://www.twitter.com/NewBedford_MA)