**Chapter 4: Application Process**

Introduction – This chapter identifies how the application should be submitted, holding the required public hearing before submission, the structure of the application and how the Idaho Commerce and the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) reviews the application.

A. Submission of the Application. Applications will be due on the third Monday in December, March, June and September. Applications received after this date will not be presented to the Council at that quarterly meeting, but the following meeting.

Applicants must submit one hard copy and one electronic copy to Commerce.

Hard copy applications may be mailed or hand delivered to the Idaho Department of Commerce (Commerce). Mailed applications must be postmarked or dated by a commercial carrier no later than midnight of the announced application deadline. Applicants must be sure that the private carrier or the U.S. Postal Service has dated the application package. If using the U.S. Postal Service, use the post office box for Commerce. Use the street address for commercial carriers. Contact your project manager to ensure the correct mailing address.

If an applicant chooses to deliver the application by hand, the package must reach Commerce during regular business hours on or before the announced application deadline.

The electronic version of the application must be e-mailed to **ICDBG@commerce.idaho.gov** no later than midnight mountain standard time on the announced application deadline. At a minimum, the electronic version must contain all the information contained in Part B of this chapter (signature pages are not expected with electronic version of application).

B. **Public Hearings.** At least one public hearing is required to permit public examination and appraisal of the application. Public hearings shall be scheduled in ways and at times to provide for full participation of citizens. To accomplish this requirement:

 1. Proper notification shall be given by a public advertisement in a local newspaper no less than seven days prior to the meeting date. The notice shall include a brief description of the proposed project; the amount of funds being requested; time and place of the public hearing; a statement that the hearing will be held in a handicap accessible facility; notification that both written and verbal comments will be accepted; and a description of the availability of services for persons with disabilities, upon request. (See following page for notice example.)

 2. The building or facility must be accessible to persons with disabilities. All information presented in the hearings shall also be available, upon request, in a form usable by persons with disabilities.

 3. Applicants are required to submit with their application the meeting minutes from the public hearing. At a minimum, the meeting minutes should include the following:

 a. The application was available for review;

 b. The range of activities to be undertaken was presented;

 c. Verification that citizen’s comments and views on the proposed application were considered prior to submittal and, if determined appropriate, a description of how the application was modified;

 d. A copy of the public notice and a list of those attending the public hearing(s);

 e. A description of any plans for the project regarding citizen participation, which may include the formation of a citizen’s advisory committee; and a description of any assistance for persons with disabilities requested and provided.

**Notice of Public Hearing**

**on Proposed Grant Activities**

(Published Advertisement)

The City/County/Tribe ( ) is submitting a proposal to the Idaho Department of Commerce for a Rural Community Block Grant (RCBG) in the amount of $ ( ). The proposed project is to (brief description) \_\_\_\_\_

 .

The hearing will include a discussion of the application, scope of work, budget, schedule, benefits of the project, and location of proposed project. The application, related documents, and RCBG Application Handbook will be available for review.

The hearing has been scheduled for (month, day, year, time, location). Verbal and written comments will be accepted prior to and at the hearing.

The hearing will be held in a facility that is accessible to persons with disabilities. Special accommodation will be available, upon request, five days prior to the hearing in a format that is usable to persons with disabilities. For more information, contact

at .

***Al ser solicitada, ésta notificación puede ser proveída en un formato fácil de usar para personas con discapacidad y/o personas con conocimientos limitados del Inglés.***

 Name and Title of Chief Elected Official

 Street Address/Post Office Box

 City/State/Zip

C. Application Format

1. All applications must follow the prescribed formatting:

 White, 8 ½” by 11” paper

Text must be typed single-spaced with double spaces between paragraphs.

All pages must be numbered.

Pages may be printed on both sides.

Maps and larger sheets must be folded to 8 ½” 11”.

Supporting documents should be noted and placed in a tabbed appendix.

All applications must be bound.

2. Applications for all projects must contain the following sections in the specified order below:

\_Cover

\_Cover Letter

\_Table of Contents

\_Rural Community Development Block Grant Application Information Form

\_Economic Advisory Council Page

\_Threshold Factors (6)

 \_Eligible Applicant

 \_Eligible Activity

 \_Administrative Capacity

 \_Public Hearing

 \_Business job commitment (agreement or letter)

 \_Business’s ability to finance their portion of the project

3. General Project Description

\_Community Development

\_Project Description

\_Site Plans

\_Project Budget

\_Environmental Scoping Form

\_Project Schedule

\_Project Development Team List

4. Review and Ranking Criteria

\_Community Distress Factors

\_Project Benefits

\_Community Project Support

\_Project Feasibility

5. Appendix should include:

\_Documentation of Public Hearing

\_Project Site Plan

\_Community Support Letters

\_Financial Commitment Letters

\_Match Commitment Letters

\_Design Professional’s Opinion of Probable Cost

\_Grantee Assistance Agreement or Commitment Letter

\_If procured, documentation of process for Grant Administrator and/or Design Professional

\_If applicable, Program Income Re-use Commitment Letter

\_Business Plan and Financial Statements (documentation can be sent under separate cover)

If the project involves the acquisition or leasing of land or real estate also include the following:

\_Fair Market Rent Analysis, if required

\_Environmental Assessment or Real Estate Inspection

\_Appraisal Report

\_Commitment to Title Insurance Policy

\_Real Estate Purchase Agreement

\_Proof of ownership

\_Lease Agreement

\_Property Management Policies and Practices

D. Application Review, Ranking and Award Process:

Each application will be ranked by department staff based on the criteria established in this handbook and RCBG rules. Each application is worth 1,000 points. The written application, which is ranked by the department staff, is worth 800 points but should score a minimum of 500 points to be considered for funding. If based on staff evaluation a project warrants review by the Economic Advisory Council (EAC)\*, the applicant then will be requested to present their application to the council. The EAC can score the application between 0 to 200 points and recommend to the Governor if the project should be funded.

**\*** The Economic Advisory Council consists of eight persons appointed by the Governor. EAC members represent the seven planning regions with one at large member. Members’ primary mission is to advise Commerce in the preparation and execution of plans, projects and programs of the Department. See Commerce’s website <http://commerce.idaho.gov/communities/economic-advisory-council> for information about the individual EAC members.

E. The review and award process:

1. The application is reviewed for eligibility. If an application does not meet the threshold criteria, it is considered disqualified and will not continue through the review process.

2. Department staff review qualified applications using the ranking system described in this handbook.

3. Department staff may meet with other funding agencies to understand the project’s viability and financial commitments.

* 1. Staff will finalize the score to the application and determine if project warrants review by the EAC.
	2. The EAC reviews the applications and presentations. After the presentation, the council scores the application and makes its recommendation to the Governor.
	3. The Governor determines to award or not award.