MUNICIPAL HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM HANDBOOK

For further information or inquiries please write or call your municipality's Small Cities Consultants:

Lisa Low & Associates
293 Riggs Street
Oxford, CT 06478
203-888-5624

Your municipality offers a Housing Rehabilitation Program on a first come, first served basis to qualified low- and moderate-income residents. The 0% loan interest funds for this program come from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and are administered through the State of Connecticut's Department of Community and Economic Development (DECD). Homeowners qualify if they are within HUD income limits (see attachment), have sufficient equity in the property, and all City taxes are current. The focus of the rehabilitation is primarily on code compliance and safety concerns.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program objectives and standards, typical deficiencies, ineligible improvements and technical procedures in the Rehabilitation Process. This handbook will be used by the municipality, owner, consultant and contractor in administering and servicing the rehabilitation assistance program.

Program Objectives:

- To prevent hazardous health conditions and code violations
- To prevent blighting influences and deterioration of property and neighborhoods
- To improve the quality of the municipality's housing stock for low-moderate income persons
- To provide financial assistance to low-moderate income property owners for housing rehabilitation activities
- To provide financial assistance to low-moderate income property owners for the purpose of septic repair or replacement, sewer and water hookups
- To stimulate public and private investment within the target area neighborhood

Program Standards:

- The program will meet the minimum standards set forth by the **HUD Section 8-HQS**, **IPMC** International Property Maintenance Code and the **IEBC** International Existing Building Code
- If funds are available, the program will review the HUD universal design standard and meet the further needs of owners or occupants

Typical Deficiencies:

- Lead Based Paint Hazards
- Smoke, Carbon Monoxide & Heat Detectors
- GFCI Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter devices
- Electrical Hazards, loose or faulty wiring, open or missing junction boxes
- Lighting Fixtures that are non-compliant, broken, or have poor efficiency
- Fuse or Circuit Breaker Panel, including Service and Grounding
- Plumbing Leaks: gas, water or waste
- Plumbing Fixtures: faucets, sinks, shower/tub & controls, toilets
- Heating System: boilers, furnaces and conversions, to include components
- Ventilation: kitchen, bath, roof and attic, crawlspace
- Septic Systems, Sewer Connections
- Exterior Property Maintenance; overgrowth, excess material, household debris
- ADA/504 Compliance or Upgrades
- Stairs; Interior Guard and Graspable Railings
- Roofing and Gutters
- Windows and Doors
- Deck and Porch Repair
- Siding and Façade Repair
- Exterior Painting
- Driveway and Drainage
- Tree pruning or Removal

Ineligible Improvements:

- Portable Items: furniture, garden or home improvement tools, wall hangings, area carpets, draperies, or shades
- Appliances: stoves, refrigerators or freezers, washing machines and dryers etc.
- Swimming pools: any repair, modification or removal
- Excessive landscaping: extensive shrubbery, sod, trees, garden materials, fixtures, equipment or landscaping of a type or quality which exceeds that customarily used in the locality for properties of the same general type as the property to be rehabilitated
- Ceramic tile, excluding shower or bathing units
- Counter tops, excluding plastic laminate
- Remodeling, including bathrooms, kitchens and living spaces that currently meet Section 8 HUD HQS

Steps Through Rehab

1. **Application**- Property owners within the Program Target Area complete the application form. Applications will be available for download at the Small Cities tab on the applicant's municipal website. At time of submission, applications are time and date

stamped for first come, first served processing. Only completed applications--including requested financial documentation--will be considered. Homeowners deemed eligible can expect to pay for title search (usually $150) and lead inspection and clearance testing costs (usually approximately $500), if applicable, as part of final rehabilitation loan. A letter declaring eligibility or ineligibility will be sent to each applicant. The letter will designate an application number and place on the waiting list.

2. **Initial Home Inspection**- Rehabilitation Specialist will schedule and then visit the property to be rehabilitated with the Owner in order to further determine if the property and dwelling is a candidate for the program. The specialist will explain the inspection and address any concerns that the Owner may have. If the project is deemed feasible, the specialist will document all deficient items in a detailed inspection report. The inspection typically takes 2 hours for a single family dwelling.

3. **Lead Based Paint Inspection**- If the dwelling was constructed prior to 1978, a Lead Based Paint inspection and Risk Assessment will be conducted by the Environmental Consultant once the Rehab Specialist determines that the dwelling and property is a candidate for the program. If applicable, the specialist will also present to the Owner the Lead Safe Guide for Rehabilitation that details compliance with the Federal pre-renovation education and renovation, repair, and painting regulations. Typically within one week of the Initial Home Inspection, the Environmental Consultant will contact the Owner and arrange a time and date for the inspection. The inspection typically takes 4 hours to conduct for a single family dwelling. Depending on the occupants in the home and the amount of lead paint found, an additional Abatement and Management plan may be required.

4. **Rehabilitation Cost Estimate**- After the initial home inspection and Lead Based paint Inspection and Risk Assessment (if Applicable) has been made, the Rehab Specialist will provide the owner a prioritized list of deficient items including a cost estimate for each and a scope of work for review and acceptance. The cost estimate is not the actual price that the work will cost, but rather an estimate to assist in bidding. Landlord investor or applicant financing (if applicable) must be secured and placed in an escrow account prior to this step in the Rehab Process.

5. **Project Manual and Specifications**- After the Owner approves of the cost estimate and the scope of work, The Rehab Specialist will prepare the project manual which includes the invitation to bid, general conditions, scope of work, bid proposal, cost estimate, and performance specifications.

6. **Bidding**- The bidding process will begin with the Rehab Specialist coordinating with the Owner a time and date for the mandatory Pre-Bid Site Walk. The Rehab Specialist will send the Project Manual to a pre-qualified contractor pool via email announcing the time and date, typically 5-7 business days from date of notice. Interested contractors will attend the mandatory site walk and make them familiar with the project. Bids are typically submitted 5-7 business days after the site walk. All bids will be publically opened and recorded at the municipality. Bids will be reviewed by the Rehab Specialist typically that day or the next. The owner and the contractors who submitted a bid will be notified by email the awarded lowest responsible bidder. All projects regardless of size must be put out to bid and awarded to the lowest responsible bidder.

7. **Contract and Mortgage Signing**- The consultant will draft the contract and mortgage documents as well as coordinate the time and date that all parties will meet at the municipality. At this time the consultant will request from both the owner and the contractor necessary insurance and documentation required for execution of the contract. The contract is between the Owner and the Contractor and the consultant acts as witness. The contract holds both parties to the stipulations of the project manual. The consultant monitors the execution of the Terms of the Contract. The mortgage is between the municipality and the owner and holds the owner to the terms of the loan.

8. **Notice to Proceed**- After the contract signing, the owner has a 3-day right of rescission. After the 3 days have passed and the owner has sent to the consultant their request that the contractor is to proceed, the Rehab Specialist will send the Notice to Proceed to the contractor. The notice requires the contractor to begin construction within 15 days and specifies the date of substantial completion required. Duration of projects vary, but generally are 30 days. During this 15 day period the contractor typically meets with the owner and reviews final color choices and measures for materials to be ordered. The contractor also obtains all permits and schedules the subcontractors and vendors.

9. **Construction Monitoring and Inspections**- After the contractor has started the project and has completed 30-50% of the work, a request for payment may be submitted for the partially completed work. The Rehab Specialist will visit the project and verify that all work billed has been performed. Only after these inspections will funds be approved for release. Payments for the rehabilitation work are frequently made as two-party checks to the Owner and Contractor. The payment is mailed to the Owner; the owner is required to sign and contact the Contractor in an expeditious manner for pickup or the payment may be mailed directly and promptly to the Contractor after homeowner signing. When all work is complete, a final inspection will be made by the Rehab Specialist, the local Building Officials, and Environmental Consultant (if applicable). When all inspections have been made and the work has been approved, the Contractor is required to have the Owner sign and approve the Certificate of Completion before any application for final payment may be submitted. The Contractor is also required to submit along with final application for payment the Certificate of Completion, Building Official Approval, Lien Waivers and final material submissions prior to release of funds. This step will complete the Rehabilitation Project.

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