



HOUSING & SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (HSS)
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

Public Service Projects
Application for Program Year 2024

Veda Ramirez, Director



Hernando County Housing & Supportive Services (HSS)
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application for Public Services Projects
Program Year (PY) 2024

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Proposal Preparer/Staff Contact Information

Locality/Organization Name	Community Food Bank
Mailing Address	5259 W Cardinal St. Homosassa, FL 34446
Organization Website	www.FEED352.ORG
Phone #	352-628-3663
Fax #	
Federal Tax ID #	80-0459100
DUNS # / SAMS#	10-062-9365
Authorized Official Name/Title	Barbara Sprague, CEO/Executive Director
Official E-mail Address	executivedirector@feed352.org
Contact Person	Barbara Sprague
Contact Person E-mail Address	executivedirector@feed352.org

Activity Title (Keep to 50 characters)

RISE Empowerment Center and Food Bank Construction

Specify Service Area (in Hernando County)

South Brooksville and all Hernando County residents and food pantries

Location where Public Services will be provided:

201 W Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Brooksville, FL 34601

Proximity to Transit-Rich Area: Will proposed activity be located within one mile of transit service? Or will transportation be provided? Please identify location and distance of nearest transit service or area where transportation will be provided:

Yes, it is on the Purple Route and a stop will be requested.

Funding Request – (Minimum \$20,000 for all projects)

	County	Other Funds	Total
Total CDBG Funds Requested	\$40,000	\$2460000	\$2500000

Activity Description (Brief – 250 character limit)

Our RISE Empowerment Center and Food Bank will serve as a community-driven space for critical resources, to celebrate heritage, and to transform the lives of Hernando County residents. This publicly accessible space will highlight local history while introducing and embracing the future for all Hernando County residents and families. The park-like campus, micro-retail incubator

marketplace, and hosted resources will support all residents in their journey to self-sufficiency and prosperity!
Whether informational, educational, vocational, entertainment, basic needs, disaster response, or fellowship, the RISE center will offer this impoverished community access to the resources and spaces they need now and to continue to build greatness in the future. It will serve as a community-driven space for critical resources, to celebrate heritage, and to transform individuals and families to have prosperous futures.

ELIGIBILITY

Please refer to the instructions for assistance in completing the proposal.

Agencies in a non-compliance status with any current funding agreement with Hernando County, as determined by HHS, are not eligible to apply under this RFP.

CDBG funding may only be used to provide reimbursement for eligible public services/programs (including salaries and benefits, supplies, materials and other program delivery costs).

Projects must provide a new service or a quantifiable increase in the current level of service and demonstrate that new or increased funding does not merely replace other state or local government funding for an existing service.

Provided whether the proposed service is either (check one):

☒ A new service
* *A project is considered new if the proposed project or service has never been funded by Hernando County under Public Services in response to this RFP*

☐ A quantifiable increase in the level of a service

I. NATIONAL OBJECTIVE CRITERIA AND ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

A. National Objectives:

1. To be eligible for CDBG funding from the County, the activity must meet the National Objective: **“Benefits low – to moderate-income (LMI) persons.”** To be considered as benefiting low- and moderate-income persons, an activity must fall into either Area Benefit, Limited Clientele/Low Mod Income or Limited Clientele/Presumed Benefit. Please check the applicable box for your activity:

☐ **Area Benefit** – The activity serves only a limited area, which is confirmed by 2020 Census data or survey to determine Low/Moderate Income. Refer to: <https://hud.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ffd0597e8af24f88b501b7e7f326bedd>. By choosing this category, you must be able to prove that your activity benefits primarily LMI households. At least 51% of the residents within the targeted activity area are LMI income households (80% AMI).

Census Tract	Block Group

X Limited Clientele/Low Mod Income

- How will you verify clientele income?
 - ☐ Tax Returns
 - ☐ Pay Stubs
 - ☐ Bank Records
 - X Other, please explain __Hosted programs and supplied pantries verify income and need via SNAP/USDA, tax returns, Pay Stubs, case management._____

☐ **Limited Clientele/Presumed Benefit** – Serving 100% of clientele that meet one of the following presumed benefit categories. Only check if applicable.

- ☐ Abused Children
- ☐ Illiterate Adults
- ☐ Elderly Persons (62+)
- ☐ Persons living with HIV/AIDS
- ☐ Battered Spouses
- ☐ Migrant Farm Workers
- ☐ Severely Disabled Adults
- ☐ Homeless Persons

2. Identify the number of low- and moderate-income households you propose to serve:

- ☐ 0-30% AMI _____ households
- ☐ 31-50% AMI _____ households
- X 51-80% AMI __100% in food relief, 75% in resource facilitation__ households

3. Number & Percentage of LMI Served. Do Not Include City of Brooksville Residents.

Please select the applicable beneficiary accomplishment type:

Unit	Total Served	Total LMI	% LMI
Individuals to be Served by Activity	70000	70000	100
Households to be Served by Activity			

B. Eligible CDBG Activities – Select One

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Counseling Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Training Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence Services |
| X Senior Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handicapped Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

II. Consistency with Hernando County Consolidated Plan

1. What priority in the 2024-2026 Consolidated Plan does the proposed project seek to address? (Please refer to Instructions for list of priorities) Economic development

III. Performance Measures: (Check all that apply to your proposal)

- ☐ Suitable Living Environment
☐ Decent Housing
X Creating Economic Opportunity

IV. Outcome Categories: (Check all that apply to your proposal)

- X Availability/Accessibility
☐ Affordability
☐ Sustainability

V. ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

- A. Scope of Services-** Provide a detailed breakdown of the proposed Scope of Services for the CDBG funding, i.e. objective of activities, the service to be provided, and the end product expected. (Limit response to 1000 characters).

The RISE Empowerment Center and Food Bank is designed as a multifunctional community hub that will:

- Provide **nutritional assistance** throughout Hernando County through 32+ pantry partners
- Offer **job readiness and training programs** via local program partners
- Host **educational workshops**, financial literacy sessions, and support services
- Feature a micro-retail incubator marketplace for aspiring and growth focused entrepreneurs to gain support, exposure, and mentorship

- Serve as a **safe and inclusive space** for underserved populations, including low-income families, seniors, and individuals experiencing homelessness

This project is part of a broader effort to revitalize the Martin Luther King Jr. corridor and address long-standing health, economic, and environmental disparities in the area.

The requested \$40,000 in funding will contribute to the \$2.5 million in necessary construction-related costs:

- Site preparation and grading, with consideration for the environmental requirements of a brownfield site
- Construction of foundational infrastructure (plumbing, electrical, and framing)
- Installation of accessible entryways and ADA-compliant features
- Sustainable building materials and systems to reduce long-term environmental impact
- Permitting and inspection fees

- B. Activity Timeline** – Please fill out projected timeline. No funds can be spent until the environmental review is complete (as applicable) and funding agreement is executed. Funds will not be available until after October 1, 2024.

Date	Milestone
8/1/2025	Phase 1 Construction begins
4/1/2025	Phase 1 Construction completed

VI. ACTIVITY BUDGET

- A. Sources** – Attach supporting documentation verifying commitment or award letters from sources external to your agency (e.g., financial institutions, government, quasi-government, or grant agencies) for this proposal. Leveraging is calculated using the following formula: Committed External Funds / Total Project Cost = Leveraged % from agency.

Other Funding Source(s) Attach letters of commitment	Amount of Funds	Committed	Pending
Truist Foundation	\$20,000	20,000	
ARPA funds Hernando County	\$250,000	250,000	
General Donations	\$2000	2000	

	\$		
Total	\$272,000	\$272,000	\$

List All Funds Received from Hernando County since 2022	Amount of Funds	Committed	Pending
2024 ARPA funds	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
Total	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$

B. Uses – Attach supporting documentation

Budgeted Activities	CDBG Funds Requested	Other Funds	Total Activity Cost
\$Phase 1 Site prep, permits, building foundation construction, driveway and sidewalks	\$40,000	\$	\$
\$	\$	\$	\$
\$	\$	\$	\$
\$	\$	\$	\$
\$	\$	\$	\$

- C.** Who prepared the cost estimate? (Attach supporting documentation)
☒ Proposer: Name of Staff Person(s) Barbara Sprague, CEO Steve Ponticos, President
☐ Other Contractor or Consultant: Name of Firm

- C.** When was the budget cost estimate prepared?
10/15/2024

- D.** On what basis did you determine that the estimated costs were reasonable and accurate?

Steve has extensive knowledge and experience in building as the owner of Sweetwater homes. Estimates are based on our current 2 facilities and their operational needs.

- E.** How will you ensure the activity will be financially sustainable after funding? (Limit response to 1000 characters)

The Community Food Bank has a self-sustaining business plan to ensure we are able to offer the lowest cost possible for food and supplies to our pantry agencies, while maintaining the logistics coordination that they rely on. Our rescued/donated food products are assigned a fee of \$0-.18 cents per pound, and the purchased product is charged at cost plus 6%

handling. These fees are then reduced with grants and funding, but allow a steady stream of revenue for our trucks, facility, and staff to perform.

VII. FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION

The documentation will help determine whether a Proposer is solvent and has the cash flow available to complete a CDBG project within the timeline of the executed agreement. All financial documents should be provided in a separate attachment from the application.

Hernando County Department of Management and Budget will be reviewing the financial stability of the organization. The following questions will be considered by the Department to determine the financial capacity of the Proposer.

A. Financial Capacity:

- X Does proposer show financial oversight and internal controls?
- X Can proposer achieve income stability by demonstrating capacity to generate income?
- X Does proposer show responsible stewardship of resources it has received?
- X Is there adequate management that has practices in place for financial reporting?
- X Is the proposer viable based on its mission and its ability to carry out its mission in a stable and effective way?

B. Financial Documents Required:

1. If the proposer has been awarded more than \$750,000 in Federal funding in the last year, then the proposer must provide the most current (no older than two years) signed copy of proposer's Single Audit.
2. If the proposer has been awarded less than \$750,000 in federal funding in the last year, then they must submit a certified financial statement in lieu of an audit. The certified financial statement must include the following information:
 - a. Current financial position to determine:
 - Stability (cash flow versus reliable income)
 - Sustainability (budget showing a surplus or deficit)
 - Reasonable accounting format (showing assets and liabilities and composition of expenses)
 - b. Results of operations or changes in net assets.
 - c. If the proposer has received any federal award (directly or indirectly), then they must provide the schedule of expenditures of the federal award(s) for the period covered by the financial statement, include the total federal award expended for each individual federal program, federal Organization name, pass-through entity

- (if applicable), and CFDA number (or other identifying number if CFDA number is not available);
- d. If applicable, identify in the financial statement notes the total amount provided for a loan or loan guarantee program(s); include the schedule of balance outstanding at the end of the audit period. Also include notes that describe the accounting policies used in preparing the schedule and if the auditee elected to use the 10% de minimis cost rate on indirect costs;
- Restrictions (temporary and permanent) that impact income statements.
 - Copy of financial policies and procedures, and
 - Copy of the most recent IRS Form 990.
3. Attachment of the organization's current financial policy and procedures.

C. Financial Analysis Parameters:

- ☐ Number of Days from Financial Statement Issued
- ☐ Current Ratio – should be equal or greater than 1 to 1
- ☐ Days Cash on Hand – Industry Average is 90 days
- ☐ Cash Flow Ratio – Ratio should be positive
- ☐ Debt Ratio
- ☐ Reliance Ratio
- ☐ Reliance on Government Ratio
- ☐ Personnel Cost Ratio
- ☐ Benefit Cost Ratio
- ☐ Gen, Admin and Fundraising Cost Ratio
- ☐ Profitability Ratio

VIII. GRANT ADMINISTRATION

A. Identify names and titles of members of the Board:

Name	Title
Steven Ponticos	President
Cynthia Lopell	Vice President
Ed Gruber	Secretary
Foster Lamm	Treasurer
John Mitten	Director
Liz Casner	Director
JoAnne Boggus	Director
Mike Orlito	Director
John Marmish	Director
Jerry Whitted	Director
Evan Soule	Director
Maggie Moore	Director
Steve Teska	Director

- B.** Identify staff members' names and position who will administer the activity and be responsible for all compliance requirements:

Name	Position
Barbara Sprague	CEO

- C.** Briefly describe the extent and years of experience of the staff members who will administer this activity with these CDBG funds. (Limit to 100 characters)

Barbara Sprague is a seasoned non-profit leader with over 25 years of experience in non-profit management, fundraising, and capital campaigns. She also has over 10 years of for profit development, re-organization, and acquisition experience.

- D.** Briefly describe the extent and years of experience of the staff members in administering grants, regulatory compliance, and fiduciary responsibilities. (Limit to 100 characters)

Barbara is assisted by our external bookkeeper Pamela Coleman, CPA Wardlow and Cash and auditors, Kelley Partners + FRS Accountants. As CEO she has directed our financials for 6 years. Dr. Foster Lamm, Treasurer has extensive experience in government contracts and department budgeting in the defense industry.

- E.** Explain proposer's administrative capacity to carry out activity successfully. (Limit to 100 characters)

The Community Food Bank waged a war on hunger when it opened its doors in 2013. Since that time, we have distributed over 38 million pounds of food and supplies and gained the partnership of 62 pantries, shelters, and soup kitchens to fulfill our mission to acquire and distribute nutritious, high-quality food and promote public awareness, inspire community involvement, and strive to end hunger and nourish hope for those in need. As we expand our outreach and partnership with Feeding America to acquire 40 more pantry partners into our network, we are also cognizant that our fight against food insecurity is based on the pillars of poverty (social, economic, and environmental). Access to food, shelter, healthcare, and education is fundamental to all humans, yet we have over 70,000 local residents existing without one or all of these necessities. We know that by creating pathways to self-sufficiency with supportive resources to meet those basic needs, individuals, families, and our entire community will prosper.

F. In the past year, did your organization have any past compliance findings or concerns from HSS monitoring (in writing) or other agency?
_No_____

G. Have all compliance issues from the past year been resolved, if applicable?
_Yes_____

H. Partnering organizations, collaborating on this program, if applicable: _Hernando County BOCC, United Way, People Helping People, St Vincent dePaul, Feeding America, Regions Bank, Hernando County YMCA and Nature Coast Outreach.

I. Marketing plan to acquire clients, if applicable. (1000-character limit)

As of July 1, 2025 Feeding America will contract the Community Food Bank to act as the Redistribution Organization for all food relief in Hernando County. The Community Food Bank does not serve residents directly and thus will have a territory of 32 pantry partners who will act as the frontline to food insecure residents. Partners providing programmatic support within the Empowerment Center have been involved in the planning and all eligible customers will be welcomed by prospective providers. The public will have access to the entire campus during business and event hours.

J. X Attach Letter from Board Chair authorizing signature of "Authorized Official."

K. Other Documentation – Please attach documents.

Federal Suspension and Debarment Certification:

Federal Executive Order 12549 prohibits federal, state, and local public agencies receiving grant funding from contracting with individuals, organizations, or companies who have been excluded from participating in federal contracts or grants. The purpose of this certification is for the contractor/vendor to advise Hernando County, in writing, of any current Federal Suspension and Debarment.

Debarment Certification. By signing and submitting a response to this competitive solicitation, I certify that this firm and its principals are not currently suspended or debarred by any Federal Department or Agency from participating in Federally Funded Contracts.

Authorized Signature of Applicant: To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information in this application is true and correct. The document has been duly authorized by the governing body of the applicant who will comply with all contractual obligations if the proposal is awarded funding.

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Typed Name and

Title: CEO

Date Signed: 5/28/2025

IX. CERTIFICATION

I certify that the information contained in this proposal is true and correct and that it contains no misrepresentations, falsifications, intentional omissions, or concealment of material facts. I further certify that no contracts have been awarded, funds committed, or construction begun on the proposed project, and that no action will be taken prior to issuance of official authorization to proceed by the Hernando County Housing & Supportive Services Department. I further certify that I am authorized to submit this Proposal and have followed all policies and procedures of my Organization regarding grant claim submissions.

Signature of Authorized Official



Name of Authorized Official

Barbara Sprague

Title

CEO

Date 5/28/2025