

City of Buffalo 2008 Federal Funding Requests



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City of Buffalo FY2008 Appropriations Requests
Member

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(1) Law Enforcement Technology

Amount: \$1 million

Local Match: City match of at least \$200,000. Also, technology will be leveraged from the City's WIFI project, valued at upwards of \$1 million.

Account: Commerce/Justice/Science – COPS Technology

Purpose: Funds are requested to assist the Buffalo Police Department in its crime fighting efforts through the development and implementation of a camera system within the City of Buffalo. Buffalo's murder rate has increased 30%, and the City is suffering from a perception that it is a dangerous place to live and work. Surveillance cameras will serve as a protective measure and enforcement tool for the police department's crime-fighting and border security efforts. Installation of a comprehensive camera system is a cost-efficient way to address these public safety and homeland security needs.

Cameras will be strategically placed in crime "hot spots" including the theatre and entertainment district, Weed & Seed areas, on the International Railroad Bridge, and at the international border area between the United States and Canada (within the City of Buffalo). In the future, it is anticipated that cameras will be installed citywide, thus covering the majority of the City's business sections in each of the five police districts.

Buffalo had a soft earmark for law enforcement technology in the House FY07 CJS Appropriations bill.

(2) Hickory Woods Environmental Remediation

Amount: \$5.6 million

Local Match: \$1 million in state funding; \$650,000 in City funding; \$250,000 EPA grant

Account: Interior and Environment – EPA/Environmental Programs and Management

Purpose: Funds are requested to conduct soil remediation in the Hickory Woods neighborhood of Buffalo to remove contaminants that have been found to exist in the soil under residential properties there. Hickory Woods was a residential infill project in a neighborhood adjacent to the former LTV Steel plant and on parcels of property formerly owned by LTV. Soil contamination has been found in this neighborhood at levels sufficient to cause a severe drop in the value of residential properties and widespread concern over the safety of living in this neighborhood. However, the City is prevented from using CDBG funds to improve the condition of the neighborhood, because of HUD concerns about the quality of the soil. The only way to keep this neighborhood viable is to do a mass soil remediation, removing up to four feet of soil and backfilling with

certified clean soil/ topsoil for the 47 homes affected. Remediation of the 47 residences is anticipated to take approximately 18-24 months and would involve relocation of the residents during the remediation of the individual parcels.

(3) Main Street Bridge

Amount: \$1 million

Local Match: Required 20% match

Account: Transportation/HUD – Transportation and Community and System Preservation (TCSP)

Purpose: Funds are requested to prepare an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for a single bridge or multiple bridge crossings from the Lower Main Street and Erie Canal Harbor Development areas to the Outer Harbor. The City's Outer Harbor area is one of the largest undeveloped waterfronts in North America and represents a critical economic development opportunity for the City and the entire Buffalo-Niagara Region. Inadequate transportation access is one of the primary reasons for the lack of development of this strategic investment area. This bridge will provide long-awaited access improvements to the City of Buffalo's Outer Harbor waterfront from the City's Downtown/Central Business District and help to catalyze and serve approximately \$750 million in proposed new economic development.

The FY2007 House T/T/HUD Appropriations bill included an earmark of \$500,000 for this project.

(4) Fruit Belt Redevelopment

Amount: \$1.6 million

Local Match: Required 20% match

Account: Transportation/HUD – Transportation and Community and System Preservation (TCSP)

Purpose: The City of Buffalo and the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) have worked collaboratively with leaders of the Fruit Belt Redevelopment Project to develop a comprehensive proposal to revitalize the Fruit Belt Neighborhood, located on Buffalo's East Side and in one of the City's oldest residential areas. The Fruit Belt Redevelopment Project will provide for much-needed residential development and health care services in the neighborhood adjacent to the BNMC – the City's burgeoning life sciences research and treatment hub. The funds requested will help cover the costs of community enhancements and

infrastructure improvements necessary to create an accessible neighborhood, encourage community development, and sustain economic growth in the area.

It is expected that this project will attract new private sector development and new residents, increasing City tax revenues and raising property values to levels of the desirable adjacent neighborhoods. Over 6,000 BNMC employees will benefit from this project, as will the approximately 7,000 residents living in the Fruit Belt neighborhood.

A \$900,000 earmark for this project was included in the House FY2007 T/T/HUD Appropriations bill.

(5) Urban Arts Center

Amount: \$500,000

Local Match: 20% City match.

Account: Transportation/HUD – Economic Development Initiative (EDI)

Purpose: Funds are requested to help cover the costs of design, planning, and construction of the Buffalo Urban Arts Center, to be located in the historic Michigan Avenue Cultural Corridor. Buffalo possesses a rich and diverse urban cultural community, but changing economic conditions and budget constraints have adversely affected the City's smaller, neighborhood-based cultural organizations. The creation of an Urban Arts Center is proposed to house the African American Cultural Center, the Langston Hughes Institute, Ujima Theater Company, Buffalo Inner City Ballet, and Love Supreme School of Music. The Buffalo Urban Arts Center would add to Buffalo's cultural tourism attractions and draw out-of-town and regional visitors. Additionally, it would assist in the financial stabilization of some of Buffalo's finest cultural and community assets.

Buffalo has made remarkable improvements over the past year to transform this area into a visitor-friendly, cultural tourism destination with the addition of a park, a historical interpretative trail, parking accommodations, and streetscape improvements. The construction of the Urban Arts Center will further distinguish this area as a cultural center in Buffalo.

(6) Micro and Small Business Loan Program

Amount: \$500,000

Local Match: Buffalo will provide \$500,000 to this program and has secured \$2 million from local banks.

Account: Financial Services – Small Business Administration/Salaries and Expenses

Purpose: Funds are requested to help further capitalize and expand the Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation's (BERC) Micro and Small Business Loan Program, which provides start-up and expansion loans to local entrepreneurs. By providing capital targeted to businesses that have difficulty accessing support through more traditional sources, this program is a key component of the City's economic revitalization agenda. Specifically, the program provides fixed interest rate loans ranging from \$1,500 to \$50,000 for operating capital, Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E) acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation for new and existing small businesses in the City.

From 2004-2006, BERC assisted 73 businesses, totaling \$8.4 million in loan volume. While this program is currently operating successfully, the program is significantly limited in range and scope due to the lack of adequate funding to address the needs of the City. With federal funding of \$500,000, coupled with \$2 million the City has secured from local bank partners and additional funding the City has committed and is working to secure from public and private sources, it is expected that BERC can provide 113 new loans, totaling over \$12 million, over the next three fiscal years to small businesses for start-ups and expansions.

(7) Young Adult Employment/Job Training Program

Amount: \$600,000

Local Match: 20% City match

Account: Labor/HHS/Education – Employment and Training Administration/Pilots, Demonstrations, and Research

Purpose: Funds are requested to help Buffalo design and implement a young adult employment and job training program to provide residents with the workforce and social skills necessary to be successful in employment. Each young adult will participate in a 4-week/10 hours per week readiness program, focusing on career exploration, employment readiness (such as resume drafting and interviewing), life skills, financial literacy, communication, conflict resolution, anger management, and academics/tutorial instruction. In addition, the program will include a community service learning component to reinforce civic responsibility, community mindedness, and the participant's responsibility for the development and enhancement of the City of Buffalo.

The City will partner with private sector employers to sponsor young adults for the training program and place them in entry-level positions. The program is expected to increase the number of young adults who graduate from high school or secure a GED, and increase the skilled workforce available to employers in Buffalo. Specifically, the program is expected to create roughly 500 new employment opportunities for young adults. The success of this program will serve as a public/private partnership model of “best practices” for other communities.

(8) Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Program

Amount: \$240,000

Local Match: 20% City match

Account: Commerce/Justice/Science – Juvenile Justice

Purpose: Funds are requested to implement a violence reduction program, The Pathways Initiative, focusing on prevention, intervention, and case management to impact youth in the City of Buffalo affected by crime and violence. In 2006, homicides in Buffalo increased by 30%. The cause of many homicides was gang activity connected to illegal drugs. This program will seek to reduce youth/gang violence in the City of Buffalo by working closely with the Buffalo Police Department Mobile Response Unit, the Buffalo Board of Education Crisis Response team, and other community organizations, including human service agencies and faith-based organizations, to improve overall public safety and quality of life. The program will target youth between the ages of 11–18 who reside in or attend school in high crime, high poverty areas of the City.

(9) Drug-Free Communities Program

Amount: \$338,000

Local match: 20% City match

Account: Labor/HHS/Education – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Purpose: Funds are requested to implement a substance abuse prevention, intervention, and enforcement program to address the high incidence of substance abuse among City residents. Efforts will focus on four key areas, utilizing a wraparound case management model: prevention through education; treatment, including specialized services for offenders and youth; enforcement through greater collaboration with Federal entities and Buffalo’s Drug Strategy partners;

and harm reduction measures to limit possible secondary effects, such as the spread of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C.

Buffalo, like many cities, has a high incidence of substance abuse and addiction among its residents which imposes considerable economic and social costs on the City, including increased burdens on hospitals, schools, and the child welfare system. The social and economic costs of alcohol and drug abuse in Buffalo are estimated at more than \$6 million per year or \$2,100 per resident. This program will address the problem in an integrated manner, including partnerships with federal agencies, and serve as an evaluation model for other communities in achieving an effective, balanced combination of enforcement and public health measures.

(10) Prisoner Reentry Program

Amount: \$300,000

Local Match: 20% City match

Account: Commerce/Justice/Science – Byrne Grants

Purpose: Funds are sought for start-up costs to design and initiate a model “wraparound” prisoner reentry program in Buffalo, in collaboration with the Erie County Re-Entry Task Force. This program will provide case management, health and substance abuse linkages, and employment preparation and job training to ex-offenders with the full range of supportive services needed to help them access and sustain employment. The program also will address specifically identified barriers in existing services, such as assuring cultural and linguistic appropriateness.

City data shows that a majority of ex-offenders are male, young (ages 21-35), violent, familiar with the prison system, have alcohol and drug abuse issues, poor work histories, housing issues, and a lack of education. There are an increasing number of ex-offenders with physical disabilities, illiteracy rates are high, and many have trouble navigating employment systems. To make matters worse, these ex-offenders are returning to communities with higher than average violent crime rates. Buffalo’s prisoner reentry program is designed to address these issues in a comprehensive and preventive manner in order to improve the success of ex-offenders upon return to their communities and to reduce recidivism rates. This program targets this problem at a useful scale for modeling in mid-size urban areas, building on lessons learned through practice and evaluation, to better leverage existing community resources and serve as a national demonstration.