TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

June 27, 2018

Re: Texas Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) program
2018 Revisions to the Texas CDBG Project Implementation Manual

Dear Stakeholders:

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) has prepared a draft of the 2018 Texas DCBG Project Implementation Manual (2018 TxCDBG Manual). Once the TxCDBG Manual is adopted, effective date September 1, 2018, these new rules will apply to all current contracts.

Highlights of the draft 2018 TxCDBG Manual

- Pre-Agreement – clarification regarding timeframes that eligible costs can be incurred. See Chapter 1, page 2 and Chapter 5, page 7.

- CDBGReporting@TexasAgriculture.gov – new email submission box for Group A, B & C documents that do not already have a designated submission email box. See Chapter 2, pages 7 - 8.

- Community Enhancement special condition regarding reporting is added to Chapter 4, page 6.

- Conform $2000 and $50,000 contract threshold references throughout the manual, mainly Chapter 5.

- All contractors, service providers, including Councils of Government (COGs) and subcontractors, must have an active registration with the System for Award Management (www.SAM.gov) AND have been cleared (not suspended or debarred) prior to any formal action authorizing the award of a contract to the contractor (examples of formal action include but are not limited to, authorizing resolution, authorizing ordinance, Council/Commissioners Court approval of award, contract execution, etc.). Chapter 5, pages 3 and throughout the chapter. Also Chapter 7, page 5.

- Selection of Administration Services through the TDA Pre-Qualification process ($50,000.00 or less) – This is a 2 Phase procurement process to preapprove a pool of Grant Administrators. Local governments solicit proposals from this pool for preparation of an application to the TxCDBG program, and subsequent administration services if a grant is awarded. Communities that do not use this method will need documented justification. This was incorporated into the 2017 manual via Policy Issuance 18-01 on February 1, 2018. See Chapter 5, page 3, 8 – 11, also the "Professional Administrative Services" page at TDA's website.

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- Conforming the service provider contract provisions that appear on the Monitoring checklists with the list in Chapter 5, page 17 – 18.

- Clarification of Grant Recipient's options when bids received exceed the designated budget. In addition to deleting bid items, they may also have the option to delete bid item quantities before contract award, if all bidders agree in writing to changes. See Chapter 5, page 21.

- Clarification when construction/work is completed - the date that all construction (including punch list items) or other project activities (excluding administrative tasks) were completed. See Chapter 7, page – and Chapter 7, page 7 and 12, page 5.

TDA welcomes feedback on this draft document. Please send any comments to Sue Short at Sue.Short@TexasAgriculture.gov. The Changes listed above and other relevant program information will be included in the 2018 TxCDBG Manual Workshops, beginning in July 2018. Please see the TxCDBG Training page of the TDA website for Workshop details.

Thank you for your efforts to assist rural Texas communities.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Barnard
Director, TxCDBG Programs