Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Fall/Winter 2026 Competitive Funding Round FAQs

As of September 11, 2026

General

Question: Where can I send the application fee?

Answer: Application fees must be made payable to the Community Development Administration or CDA and remitted directly to the attention of:

Community Development Administration
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Attn: Linda Tune
Post Office Box 2524
Landover Hills, MD 20784

In the memo of the check include: **2524 CDA MF – Project Name**

A copy of the application fee cover sheet in the Application Submission Package must be fully completed, uploaded to the project WorkCenter, and a copy must be sent with the check.

Question: Have the application documents been updated to reflect the new QAP?

Answer: The Application Submission Package and CDA Form 202 titled "**Form_202_Instructions (Sept 2026) BETA TEST**" have been updated. All applications must utilize the Application Submission Package and CDA Form 202 dated September 2026 titled "**Form_202_Instructions (Sept 2026) FINAL**". A final updated CDA Form 202 will be released the week of September 28th based on continued feedback.

Question: I found an error or an issue with CDA Form 202 – what do I do?

Answer: DHCD will update CDA Form 202 as we are made aware of issues and post the updated version on our website. If you identify an issue, please ensure that you are using the most up-to-date version of the form by verifying the effective date in cell L4 on the General tab. If your issue has not been resolved in the most up-to-date version, please email dhcd.qap@maryland.gov, and we will look into the issue.

Question: Can electronic signatures be used, or are original signatures required?

Answer: LIHTC applications may be executed by electronic signature, which shall be considered an original signature for all purposes and shall have the same force and effect as an original signature.

Without limitation, "electronic signature" shall include electronically scanned and transmitted versions (e.g., via PDF) of an original signature and any typed signature, including any electronic symbol or process adopted by either party with the intent to sign the Commitment, including the use of DocuSign or other similar programs.

Question: How do you request a pre-application meeting?

Answer: Complete the Pre-Application Meeting Request Form to submit your pre-application meeting request. The link can also be found on DHCD's website in the Multifamily Library by clicking the Developers & Contractors tab, then Multifamily Library, Applications Documents, and Pre-Application Meeting Request Form. Once the request is submitted, DHCD will reach out to schedule the meeting.

Question: How does the electronic application submission work?

Answer: Complete the Electronic Application Request Form to request a Procorem WorkCenter for each project. The folder is divided into subfolders to mirror the application submission kit. Once you receive the project WorkCenter, you should begin uploading your application documents into the correct subfolders. Documents should use the following naming convention: Document Name_PROJECT NAME_MMDDYYYY.

Question: When are waivers due?

Answer: Waivers are due on September 21st, 2026. Waivers granted in previous rounds are not automatically approved and must be resubmitted for consideration in the current round.

Form 202

Question: On the Leverage and Cost Effectiveness worksheet, is "Combined Low Income Housing Tax Credit Eligible Costs" referencing the incorrect cell?

Answer: Yes, applicants should input the value from the Tax Credit worksheet cell **J180**, not the value from J177.

Question: Can CDA unlock the Visuals, Draw Schedule, Applicant Notes, and Final Budget worksheets?

Answer: All worksheets are unlocked on the Form 202 currently in the Multifamily Housing Development Document Library.

Question: Is a Draw Schedule required at application?

Answer: Yes, a Draw Schedule is required at application that matches the Sources and Uses worksheets.

Question: On the Self-Score Worksheet, is the calculation for Mixed Income Housing incorrect?

Answer: Yes, applicants should correct the formula to (# of Market Rate Units ÷ # of Affordable Units) x 10 or =(INCOME!F59/INCOME!F41)*10.

Real Estate Taxes and HB0571

Question: Can eligible nonprofit applicants with eligible projects underwrite to $0 in annual real estate taxes?

Answer: Yes, applicants should include a copy of their application submitted to the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) for Preliminary Qualification, SDAT Preliminary Qualification Letter (if received), IRS designation letter and Certificate of Status for the eligible nonprofit.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Set-Aside

Question: How many units do I need to provide if 50% of the total units are not a whole number?

Answer: Standard rounding rules will apply. If the number you are rounding is followed by 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9, round the number up. If the number you are rounding is followed by 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4, round the number down. For example, 50% of 25 affordable units are 12.5; therefore, 13 PSH units would be needed to meet the set-aside threshold.

Question: If I need to round up for the PSH units due to an uneven number of total units, will I still qualify for full points under §4.4.2 Targeted Populations even though the PSH units exceed 50% of the total units?

Answer: Projects competing in the PSH Set-Aside will still qualify for ten (10) points under §4.4.2 Targeted Populations if the PSH units exceed 50%, as long as the overage is due to rounding to meet the 50% PSH unit requirement. Projects that have PSH units in excess of 50% of the total units for reasons other than rounding will receive zero (0) points.

Threshold: §3.5.3 Units for Persons Experiencing Homelessness

Question: How many units do I need to provide if 15% of the affordable units is not a whole number?

Answer: Standard rounding rules will apply. If the number you are rounding is followed by 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9, round the number up. If the number you are rounding is followed by 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4, round the number down. For example: 15% of 52 affordable units is 7.8; therefore, 8 set-aside units would be needed to meet the threshold requirements.

Threshold: §3.1 Development Team Requirements

Question: For the required financial statements under 3.1, what reporting period should be submitted?

Answer: 2023, 2024, & 2025 plus interim statement through the first three quarters of calendar year 2026.

Question: Who is required to submit financial statements?

Answer: Project sponsors, project owners, guarantors, and general partners/managing members with an ownership interest in the project's ownership entity, whether individuals, corporate entities, partnerships, or limited liability companies hold such roles are required to submit financial statements.

Question: What types of financial statements are acceptable?

Answer: Audited or reviewed financial statements are required for the most recent year for guarantors and developers/sponsors with twenty-five (25) percent or greater ownership. Compiled financial statements are acceptable for subsequent years. **Compiled** financial statements prepared by an independent CPA are acceptable for developers/sponsors with less than twenty-five (25) percent ownership.

Question: What should be included in the financial statements?

Answer: The financial statements must include calculations of **total assets, total liabilities, current assets,** and **current liabilities.**

Threshold: §3.6 Other Financing Commitments

Question: Do I need an LOI for a seller note if I already own the property?

Answer: Yes, we require documentation for all funding sources.

Question: Can MEEHA funds be requested in the Round application?

Answer: Projects can model $1,500 per unit in MEEHA funds for new construction and $5,300 in MEEHA funds for rehabilitation. For awarded projects, actual funding amounts may vary significantly depending on the final scope of work and the developer will be obligated to fill any financing gaps resulting from a difference in underwritten and actual funding amounts. The Energy Team will determine actual funding amounts for awarded projects after kickoff.

Threshold: §3.11.4 Environmental Assessments

Question: Does the Environmental Due Diligence Checklist have to be completed by a third party, or can the sponsor complete it based on its observations of the site?

Answer: The sponsor cannot complete the Environmental Due Diligence Checklist. DHCD requires a qualified professional who is independent of the development, design, or construction team to complete the Environmental Due Diligence Checklist.

Threshold: §3.12.2 Capture Rate

Question: What income targeting should the market studies use when evaluating capture rates for Project-Based voucher units?

Answer: The capture rate analysis for Project-Based Voucher (PBV) unit(s) should use 60% AMI to account for reversion of the unit(s) to 60% AMI in the event of the termination, non-renewal or defunding of the PBV HAP contract.

Threshold: §3.13.3 Additional Criteria Applicable Only to Substantial Renovation

Question: Does the Building Evaluation Report (BER) need to be completed by a 3rd party?

Answer: No, DHCD requires the BER to be completed by an engineer or other qualified professional. For the BER, applicants must provide a preliminary engineering assessment of the building, for these purposes, architects are not considered to be qualified professionals.

Threshold: §3.14 Additional Criteria Applicable Only to the Competitive Funding Round

Question: Do I need to request a waiver of Section 3.14 for the Fall/Winter 2026 Competitive Round if my project does not meet the Section 4.7 Housing Starts Now criteria?

Answer: No, you do not need a waiver. DHCD has automatically waived this requirement for the Fall/Winter 2026 Competitive Round.

Competitive Scoring: §4.1.4 NPs, PHAs, Local Small Businesses

Question: What types of service providers will qualify for receiving points as Secondary Development Team members under Category 4?

Answer: The “Secondary Development Team” includes the project’s civil engineer, attorney, accountant, and/or other specialized professional service providers. While DHCD does not pre-score development team members, we are happy to provide feedback during your pre-application meeting. Examples of specialized professional service providers that have received points in previous rounds include civil engineers, environmental consultants, green building consultants, legal consultants, MEP engineers, structural engineers, supportive services providers, and traffic consultants.

Question: Are Local Small Businesses required to submit Bylaws or Operating Agreements?

Answer: Yes, applicants must submit all documentation listed in the Application Submission Package for Local Small Businesses, Nonprofit Entities and Public Housing Authorities. Highly sensitive or proprietary information can be redacted from Operating Agreements if CDA can still verify who has the authority to sign binding legal agreements and accept the state funding. If preferred, documents can be password-protected for upload to Procorem, and passwords can be emailed to CDA to the attention of Caty Waterman at caty.waterman1@maryland.gov.

Question: What Small Business Administration (SBA) definition of local a small business is being used to earn points for Local Small Businesses?

Answer: For the upcoming Competitive Round, companies seeking local small business points should ensure that they meet the SBA requirements for government contracting, including their size standards. The SBA website includes a table and tool to help determine whether your business qualifies under the size standards. Both the tool and the table are organized according to individual North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes.

Competitive Scoring: §4.3: Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

Question: How can I stack points across categories for TODs?

Answer: Within Category 1, you may choose one option and can receive up to the maximum points for that respective option. You cannot get points for multiple options within Category 1. You may stack your Category 1 point with points from Category 2.

Competitive Scoring: §4.4.1 Income Targeting

Question: How are project-based voucher (PBV) units counted for income targeting?

Answer: Under 4.4.1, Income Targeting, PBV units will be scored as 30% units. This allows projects to ensure applicants from the PHA waiting list aren't skipped if their income exceeds 30% of the AMI, without negatively impacting the income targeting score.

Question: Does the project-based voucher language only apply to mobility programs referenced in the Guide?

Answer: No, DHCD considers project-based vouchers awarded through local PHAs as 30% AMI units for the purposes of income targeting scoring, assuming applicants have a project-based voucher contract with a term of at least fifteen (15) years.

Question: How will project-based vouchers be recorded in the regulatory agreement?

Answer: DHCD will record the project-based voucher rent restrictions at the levels set in the application. Specifically, if the applicant's target project-based voucher units at 60% of the AMI, those units will be considered 30% units for scoring purposes but recorded as 60% units in the regulatory agreement.

Competitive Scoring: §4.4.4 Tenant Services

Question: If I chose the CORES designation for a project funded in a previous Round, can I still choose the CORES designation for Tenant Services even if I haven't received the certification yet?

Answer: If you chose the CORES designation for a project funded in a previous Round, you would need to submit either proof of CORES certification, partnership with a CORES certified 3rd party, or a copy of the Pre-Screen Approval Email from CORES to demonstrate that you have initiated the application process and believe that you meet their threshold requirements. If your application was funded in a previous Round and you chose the CORES designation but did not achieve the designation or partner with a CORES-certified 3rd party by closing, then you will need to provide proof of CORES certification or partnership with a CORES-certified 3rd party with your 2025 application(s) in order to receive the CORES designation points in this category.

Competitive Scoring: §4.4.6 Policy Incentives

Question: Can a project receive policy incentive points in more than one category?

Answer: Policy points will be awarded based on the final project scores, excluding any possible points in Section 4.4.6. As long as a project is among the top 2 or 3 highest-scoring projects, depending on the category, they are eligible to receive those points, up to a total of four (4) points. Therefore, it is possible to receive points in more than one category. All categories will be assessed based on the final project score, excluding points awarded in Section 4.4.6.

Question: What documentation needs to be provided for Choice Neighborhood projects to receive points in Section 4.4.6?

Answer: Documentation of a Choice Neighborhood designation may include an award notification from HUD, letters of intent to provide financial assistance, or other documentation as proof of the designation.

Competitive Scoring: §4.5.1 Direct Leveraging

Question: What is the raise-up rate for Low Income Housing Tax Credits that the Department will use for scoring purposes in Section 4.5.1 Direct Leveraging?

Answer: The Department will use a raise-up rate of 84 cents.

Question: Do HTF and State HOME funds count as state funds for leveraging?

Answer: Yes, under Section 4.5.1, State resources include DHCD-administered rental housing resources, including HTF and State HOME funds. Project CORE/Baltimore Vacants Reinvestment Initiative (BVRI), Strategic Demolition funds, and the Emerging Developer Loan Fund are the only DHCD funds specifically mentioned as leveraged funds in this section. The Department may designate new funds as leveraged funds for the purpose of scoring, as determined by the Secretary or designee.

Question: How do I calculate the leveraging score for a "twinning" project?

Answer: Projects submitting "twinning" applications should only calculate leveraging based on the 9% project. Projects that meet the definition of twinning under Section 3.9.9, with an overall total of at least 120 units and demonstrate a need for at least $5 million in MBP financing, will receive two (2) additional points on their leveraging score.

Competitive Scoring: §4.5.2 Operating Subsidies

Question: What are the Entitlement Jurisdictions for the purposes of Operating Subsidy scoring?

Answer: For the calculations in Section 4.5.2, the Entitlement Jurisdictions are Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Harford County, Howard County, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County.

Question: Do PILOTs still count for points under Section 4.5.2 Operating Subsidies?

Answer: Yes, as long as the PILOT reduces operating costs. The local taxing jurisdiction must provide a letter outlining the first-year savings the PILOT represents compared to the projected standard tax assessment and stating the duration of the PILOT.

Question: How should the PILOT be documented?

Answer: To receive points for a PILOT, the local taxing jurisdiction must provide a letter outlining the first-year savings the PILOT represents compared to the projected standard tax assessment and stating the duration of the PILOT.

Competitive Scoring: §4.6.4 Lovable Places

Question: Is there an option to do fewer than three of the lovable places options and get partial points?

Answer: No, there is no option to get pro-rated points if you do one or two of the lovable place features. A project must include at least three of the five options to receive the points.

Question: Given the walkability component of lovable places, is this section only for projects in urban areas?

Answer: No, projects in any area can achieve the lovable places distinction. Projects in rural areas can promote walkability. While there is specific language for projects in urban or similar districts, any project can include walkability designs.

Question: Do projects seeking points under Category B still need to promote walkability, community connections, and community design?

Answer: Yes, all projects seeking points under Lovable Places need to promote walkability, community connections, and community design as detailed in §4.6.4.

Question: How do I know if my design for Lovable Places will receive points?

Answer: If your Lovable Places designs/narrative are submitted along with your pre-application meeting request form, the CDA team will review prior to the meeting and provide feedback during the meeting.

Competitive Scoring: §3.12.1 Market Analysis and 4.6.4 Lovable Places

Question: How should projects providing a community service facility under Section 4.6.4 demonstrate that the services provided would be appropriate and helpful to individuals in the area of the project whose income is sixty (60) percent or less of area median income? Is additional documentation required besides the analysis in the market study?

Answer: For projects providing a community service facility (as defined in Section 4.6.4), the market study analyst must determine that the programs or services provided would be appropriate and helpful to individuals in the area of the project whose income is sixty (60) percent or less of area median income and include a narrative analysis and evidence in the market study. For projects providing a community service facility (as defined in Section 4.6.4), the application must include a Letter of Interest from the operator of the facility that includes the date, operator's contact information, a statement of interest, the operator's core competencies, the target population to be served, and a summary of programs or services to be provided.

Competitive Scoring: §4.7 Housing Starts Now

Question: How will extensions be granted if a project cannot close within 1 year of the project award date?

Answer: CDA may grant an extension to applicants/sponsors who demonstrate they initiated the necessary site plan approval process with the applicable jurisdiction within 45 days of the award notification. This includes submitting formal applications or providing written correspondence with local officials/planning department, or an equivalent agency responsible for site plan approval.

CDA anticipates granting extensions in three (3)-month blocks and rescinding awards for any project that cannot close within 18 months of the award. We encourage awarded projects to proactively update CDA on their progress as they move through the site approval process.

Question: Can I get points for being zoned for the intended use if I still need a variance or exception?

Answer: Applicants and sponsors can submit waivers for minor variances, e.g., small setbacks or similar adjustments. As part of the request, waivers must include supporting documentation in accordance with Section 3.11.3; they must demonstrate that they are routine in the jurisdiction, include a schedule and analysis by the Development Team's zoning attorney or engineer per Section 3.10, and demonstrate that the project can close within 12 months of an award in accordance with DHCD's Housing Starts Now criteria.

Twinning

Question: What qualifies as a "twinning project"?

Answer: "Twinning" projects are defined as one (1) 9% LIHTC project and one (1) MBP/4% LIHTC project on the same common plan of development or larger development located on the same, contiguous, or proximate sites. Other structures will not be accepted.

Question: If I have a "twinning" project, do I need to submit full applications for the 4% and 9% projects?

Answer: The 9% LIHTC project needs to submit a full application. For the 4% LIHTC project, we require CDA Form 202, architectural schematics, and letters of intent. No other information is required for the 4% LIHTC, although a full application for the 4% LIHTC project will be required within 90 days of receiving the 9% reservation letter. Remember, to be considered a "twinning" project in the Spring/Summer 2026 Competitive Funding Round, projects must have a common development plan, include a minimum of 120 units, and demonstrate a need for at least $5 million in MBP financing.

Question: When does the MBP/4% LIHTC project application need to be submitted?

Answer: If awarded 9% LIHTC, the application for the 4% project must be received within ninety (90) days of receiving the 9% reservation letter. Both the 9% and 4% components must reach initial closing within ninety (90) days of each other.

Question: Do the 9% LIHTC and MBP/4% LIHTC projects need to be separate buildings?

Answer: No, the projects do not need to be separate buildings, but separate buildings are allowed. If the projects are both in one building, "checkerboarding" of units within the building will not be permitted. For example, in a horizontal split, you might have the 9% LIHTC units on the east side of the building and the MBP/4% LIHTC units on the west side with a firewall separating the two. You might have the 9% LIHTC units on the first three floors and the MBP/4% LIHTC on the 4-6th floors with separate elevators in a vertical split. Any common areas should have cross-use agreements, and the two projects should look and run the same.

Miscellaneous

Question: Are Solar Systems, Security Systems, and Playground Soft or Hard costs?

Answer: Solar Systems, Security Systems, and Playgrounds are considered hard costs and must be included in the construction budget. Budgets that include these costs as soft costs will not be accepted.