



County of Santa Cruz

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 520, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073
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SUSAN A. MAURIELLO, J.D., COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

January 18, 2008

AGENDA: January 29, 2008

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
 County of Santa Cruz
 701 Ocean Street
 Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Community Development Block Grant Program

Dear Members of the Board:

On December 11, 2007, your Board accepted a report on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program (Attachment 1) and directed the County Administrative Office and the Clerk of the Board to schedule and notice the required initial CDBG public hearing upon release of the Notice of Funding Allocation (NOFA) for the General Allocation grant program. Because release of the NOFA has been delayed and the turn-around time for submittal of the application will be short, CDBG staff has suggested that local jurisdictions hold the initial public hearing at this time, prior to release of the NOFA, in order to allow more time for completing the application process. The noticing requirements for the public hearing have been met and a copy of the notice is included as Attachment 2.

The Public Hearing Process

CDBG guidelines identify two separate types of required hearings – a Project Design Phase public hearing and an Application Submittal Phase public hearing. Today's public hearing is the Project Design Phase hearing. Its purpose is to address the overall CDBG program which includes the Planning and Technical Assistance Allocation, the Economic Development Allocation and the General Allocation. Two additional programs, the Native American Allocation and the Colonia Allocation (available to communities within 150 miles of the Mexican border) are not relevant to Santa Cruz County. Today's hearing provides an opportunity for the public to comment on activities that might lend themselves to grant funding under any of these programs. While community input for potential projects under all CDBG programs is encouraged, because the NOFA for the General Allocation is to be released soon, funding suggestions for this program are a focal point at this time. It is estimated that approximately \$500,000 will be made available per jurisdiction during the upcoming funding cycle.

Because it is anticipated that the General Allocation NOFA will be released within the next

thirty days, the next step in the CDBG process will be to schedule the second required public hearing for your Board's approval of the General Allocation program application, assuming that suitable projects have been identified. As NOFAs are released for the Planning and Technical Assistance Allocation and the Economic Development Allocation in the future, a second Application Submittal Phase public hearing will be held for each of these programs too, pending the identification of suitable projects. It is anticipated that the NOFA for the Planning and Technical Assistance Allocation will be released in July 2008 and that the Economic Development Allocation will be released September 2008 at the earliest.

Examples of Eligible Projects

Attachment 1 provides information regarding the types of CDBG grants that are available, essential objectives that must be met in applying for these grants and an estimate of the amount of grant funds that are generally made available during each funding cycle. In addition to this information, the following paragraphs provide examples of projects that are typical under each of the funding allocations. A chart which combines the information from Attachment 1 and this letter is included as Attachment 3.

Planning and Technical Assistance Allocation

There are two types of Planning and Technical Assistance Allocations. Project Specific Activities are those where a physical project has been defined and planning grant funds will likely lead to the physical development of a project such as construction of a home ownership project, development of a new food distribution center, rehabilitation of a public building to comply with ADA or development of a new park. Projects that do not lead to the development of a physical project are considered Non-Project Specific Activities and might include development of a working model for a community land trust, conducting an income survey to determine whether or not a project qualifies for General Allocation funds or development of a master drainage plan. Again, it is anticipated that a NOFA for these allocations will be released in July 2008.

Economic Development Allocation

Over-the-counter Funds – This program provides funding for public infrastructure in support of business development; construction; fixtures, furniture, and equipment; working capital; land acquisition; private onsite improvements; business start-ups; loan guarantees and small business incubators.

Economic Enterprise Funds – The Business Assistance component of the Economic Development Allocation provides loans for construction, equipment purchases, land acquisition, privately-owned on-site improvements and working capital as well as loan guarantees. The Microenterprise component serves businesses with five or fewer employees, one or more of whom owns the business. Microenterprise assistance activities include credit, loan guarantees and other forms of financial support to

establish, stabilize or expand microenterprises; technical assistance and business support services to owners of microenterprises; and general support, including peer support programs, counseling, child care and transportation to persons who own or are developing a microenterprise. The NOFA for the Economic Development Allocation is expected to be released in October 2008.

General Allocation

Eligible activities fall under the categories of Public Works, Community Facilities, Public Services and Housing (new construction, acquisition and rehabilitation). Public Works projects include acquisition, construction, rehabilitation and installation of projects such as water treatment facilities, drainage projects and flood mitigation. Community Facilities include acquisition, rehabilitation or new construction of buildings and grounds for public purposes such as training, health services, education, recreation, nutrition, shelter, day care, temporary housing and fire protection. Public Services include child care, health care, job training, recreation programs, education, public safety, services for senior citizens, services for homeless persons, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, transportation services and nutritional services. CDBG funds are generally used in support of new housing construction projects, with limited use for actual construction. Typical activities include site clearance, on-site and off-site improvements, site and utility plans, preliminary cost estimates and sketch drawings.

Due to the anticipated release of the General Allocation NOFA in February 2008, several potential projects have been brought to our attention. These include the Davenport Water Treatment Facility Project, the Second Harvest Renovation Project, the CASA for CASA Project and the Felton Library Construction Project. We are in the process of working with CDBG staff to determine whether or not these projects will be eligible for General Allocation funding.

CDBG Workshops

Santa Cruz County is a relative newcomer to the CDBG process. In discussions with CDBG staff over the past months, it is evident that there is much to learn about the various programs that are offered. Clearly, CDBG is an extremely competitive program. For example, we have been advised that a potential project may be eligible but not competitive for various reasons cited in Attachment 1. Fortunately, besides written information about program requirements, workshops are also held subsequent to the release of each NOFA. It is anticipated that staff will be attending the workshop for the General Allocation program in February 2008.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The CDBG program provides a unique opportunity for local communities to take advantage of funds that can be used for the development of viable urban communities through its support of enhanced living environments, quality housing, and economic opportunities for low and moderate income individuals and households. Staff has explored the various CDBG programs as detailed in this letter and in Attachments 1 and 3. As part of this process, a public hearing is required to enable the public and your Board to review funding possibilities and make suggestions to staff for possible activities to explore over the coming year.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that your Board take the following actions:

1. Open the public hearing for discussion of the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) program, including the Planning and Technical Assistance Allocation, the Economic Development Allocation and the General Allocation programs;
2. Receive public comment regarding suggestions for potential projects for CDBG funding;
3. Direct staff to return with CDBG applications for eligible projects for the various programs as funds become available through the CDBG program allocations;
4. Direct staff to report back on or before March 18, 2008 with a status report on projects recommendations for the General Allocation grant submittal; and
5. Direct the County Administrative Office and the Clerk of the Board to schedule and notice a second public hearing upon release of the NOFA for the General Allocation grant program.

Very truly yours,



Susan A. Mauriello
County Administrative Officer

Attachments

cc: Planning Department Redevelopment Agency County Administrative
Public Works Department Human Resources Department Office

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County of Santa Cruz

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(831) 454-2100 FAX: (831) 454-3420 TDD: (831) 454-2123

SUSAN A. MAURIELLO, J.D., COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

December 11, 2007

AGENDA: December 11, 2007

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Community Development Block Grant Program

Dear Members of the Board:

On November 7, 2006, your Board adopted a new General Plan Housing Element which was conditionally certified by the State on December 12, 2006 pending completion of a rezoning program to ensure that the State's requirements for affordable housing sites were met. With certification, the County would be in a position to apply for State Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which have been unavailable to us. CDBG funds and the various programs through which these funds are distributed are the focus of this letter, with an emphasis on the forthcoming General Allocation program and potential funding opportunities for County projects.

Overview of the CDBG Program

The CDBG Program was established by the federal Department of Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. Subsequent legislation allowed the states to administer the program for smaller counties and cities, and in 1982, the California Legislature assumed State oversight of the program and assigned CDBG management to the Department of Housing and Community Development. The State CDBG program is implemented by the California Health and Safety Code, section 50825, et seq, and the California Code of Regulations (Title 25, Section 7050, et seq).

The primary federal objective of the CDBG program is the development of viable urban communities by providing for quality housing in a suitable living environment and by expanding economic opportunities for low and moderate income individuals and households.

In order to be eligible for the CDBG program, jurisdictions are required to have a certified housing element. The County's current housing element status is conditional upon the completion of the rezoning process. This may impact the County's eligibility for this program. Notwithstanding this uncertainty, staff is proposing to proceed in anticipation of a satisfactory resolution of the housing element.

Each year, CDBG makes funds available to eligible jurisdictions through several allocations: General, Economic Development, Planning and Technical Assistance, Native Americans and Colonias (communities within 150 miles of the Mexican border). The General Allocation, the Economic Development Allocation and the Planning and Technical Assistance Allocation are most suitable to the needs of Santa Cruz County. Of these three, the General Allocation provides available funding opportunities in the near future. The notice of funding availability (NOFA) is

anticipated to be released in late December of this year. The funding cycles for the Economic Development Allocation and the Planning and Technical Assistance Allocation will not begin again until sometime after the start of the 2008-09 fiscal year. The following sections of this letter briefly describe each of the three allocations with an emphasis on the General Allocation since funding for that program will be available shortly.

Highly Competitive

CDBG programs are highly competitive. The application process is rigorous, requiring strict adherence to State and Federal guidelines. All CDBG activities must meet at least one of three national objectives: 1) benefit low income households/persons; 2) eliminate slums and blight; and 3) meet an urgent need.

Most grant programs require that a federal low income benefit objective be met. For example, many grants require that a minimum of 51 percent of the individuals benefitting from a grant activity be in the 'targeted income group' (TIG). A TIG individual or household is one whose gross family income is 80 percent or less of the county median income, adjusted for family size. For example, a family of four in Santa Cruz County would need to earn \$63,350 or less per year to qualify for TIG status. A proposed project would begin to earn points at 51% TIG benefit and would need to achieve a 90% TIG benefit in order to score the maximum number of points possible. Additionally, other grants may include a job benefit requirement in that a project must create at least one full time job for every \$35,000 of CDBG funds spent or that the business that is assisted through the use of CDBG funds serve at least one TIG person for every \$350 of CDBG funds spent.

Applications are scored based on a number of factors including the jurisdiction's relative poverty index as compared to competing jurisdictions and the percent of county-wide unemployment relative to statewide averages. Grants typically provide minimal time between release of the notice of funding and the application deadline. Depending on the specific grant program and proposed activity, applicants who are familiar with the CDBG process often begin preparation one or more years in advance of an anticipated notice of funding. Examples of the competitive nature of the CDBG programs are included in the following descriptions of the three types of allocations most applicable to Santa Cruz County.

The Planning and Technical Assistance Allocation (PTA)

The Planning and Technical Assistance (PTA) Allocation is geared to the preparation that is often needed in advance of applying for the larger General and Economic Development allocations. PTA grants are used to fund studies, cost estimates, preliminary engineering, and preparation of funding applications. PTA grant applications are non-competitive and awarded on a first-come-first-served basis as long as grant requirements are met, including a local match. PTA grants are in high demand and applications need to be made immediately after the funding cycle is initiated. It is anticipated that PTA funds will be made available in June 2008. The total amount of funding and the maximum award per jurisdiction is not known at this time but estimated to be around \$140,000 per jurisdiction.

43

PTA grants are often used to fund income surveys to ensure that a potential project meets the 'targeted income group' (TIG) requirement. Sometimes the overall income level of a

census block can be used to determine whether or not the project meets the TIG low income objective, especially if the census block income data indicates that incomes are well above the 51% threshold. However, if the overall income level of a census block is close to or below the 51% threshold but it is likely to include a concentration of TIG individuals in the specific area to be served by the project, a door-to-door income survey will be necessary.

The Economic Development Allocation

The purpose of Economic Development grants is to create jobs that will benefit low-moderate income individuals and to support businesses that create the jobs. There are two categories of Economic Development grants: Over-the-counter (OTC) grants and Economic Enterprise grants.

1. OTC grants are used to provide loans to employers for activities which will result in the creation or retention of permanent jobs or to construct the infrastructure necessary to accommodate a business that will create jobs. A jurisdiction applies to CDBG on behalf of a business or developer for loans to be used for activities such as construction, equipment purchases, land acquisition and **business start-ups**.

OTC funded activities are generally larger projects requiring significant lead time. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis, upon invitation by CDBG, usually after a pre-application process. Approximately \$6 million was made available in July 2007 for OTC grants with a maximum of \$2.5 million per applicant. It is anticipated that the next funding cycle will begin in July 2008.

Applications must meet the \$35,000/\$350 job objective described in the Overview of the CDBG Program section above and are evaluated based on a number of factors including the county-wide unemployment rates relative to the statewide average and the ratio of private funds to CDBG funds.

2. Economic Enterprise funds are also used to create and retain jobs. The Business Assistance Program provides loans for business start-ups and expansions that will create or retain **jobs** as well as for necessary supporting infrastructure. Loans can be used for activities such as construction, equipment purchases and land acquisition. Each business that receives assistance must meet the \$35,000/\$350 job objective. Assistance is also given to microenterprises, businesses with 5 or fewer employees including the owner(s). The owner of a microenterprise receiving CDBG assistance must meet the 51% TIG requirement.

The Economic Enterprise Program awards are granted on a competitive basis. In the 2007-08 funding cycle, \$4.5 million were made available to potential applicants with a maximum grant of \$500,000 per applicant. It is anticipated that the next funding cycle will begin around October 2008.

The General Allocation and Funding Opportunities

Notice of the availability of funding for CDBG's 2007-08 General Allocation is expected to be released late this month. General Allocation funds are used for public works projects, community facility projects, public service programs and housing projects including rehabilitation, acquisition and new construction activities. Staff has been made aware of several projects that may qualify for these funds and has explored this grant option in some detail. The amount of funds that will be made available is not known at this time, but it is likely that the maximum award, available per jurisdiction during the 2007-08 funding cycle, will be around \$500,000. Up to two projects and a less competitive, smaller (set-aside) project can be included in one application.

General Allocation grants are very competitive. It is anticipated that the scoring criteria for 2007-08 will be similar to that of previous years, with the 51% TIG benefit being the most critical. Additional criteria will likely include the jurisdiction's relative poverty level compared with other applicants, community need for the activity, the commitment of funds from non-state and federal sources and the capacity of staff to manage the project.

Preparation for the 2007-08 General Allocation Funding Cycle

Several projects have been brought to the attention of our office as possible candidates for the 2007-08 CDBG General Allocation funding cycle. These include the Davenport Water Treatment Facility Project, the Second Harvest Renovation Project, the CASA Child and Family Home Counseling Center and the Felton Library Construction Project. Until the 2007-08 notice of funding is released later this month, the viability of any of these or other potential projects is uncertain. What is certain is that these projects and any others that might be considered for General Allocation funding will need to meet the 51% TIG benefit. Once the notice of funding is released, additional time will be needed to fully evaluate potential activities in terms of grant requirements and project readiness and to consult with CDBG regarding the competitiveness of projects.

The time from when the General Allocation notice of funding is released to the application submittal deadline will likely be under three months. During this period of time, per CDBG guidelines, two public hearings must be held. The first hearing provides the jurisdiction with an opportunity to explain the CDBG requirements and process and to invite suggestions for potential projects. No less than thirty days after the first public hearing, a

second hearing is scheduled. This hearing occurs after the application is completed and before it is submitted to CDBG. The purpose of this hearing is for your Board to consider and approve the projects being submitted for funding.

In view of the short application timeline, the requirements of the public hearing process (including the time required to notice the hearings) and the Board's meeting schedule over the next several months, we are recommending that your Board direct staff to notice the first public hearing as soon as the notice of funding is made available. This approach, rather than waiting to report to your Board after the funding notice is released, will save several weeks and allow more time between the hearings to explore project options.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. Its goal is to help to ensure affordable housing, provide services to the most vulnerable in a community, and to create jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses. At this time, the General Allocation program of CDBG appears to hold the most immediate and likely potential funding opportunities for the County of Santa Cruz.

It is therefore Recommended that your Board take the following actions:

1. Accept and **file** this report on the Community Development Block Grant program; and
2. Direct the County Administrative Office and the Clerk of the Board to schedule and notice the initial CDBG public hearing upon release of the notice of funding for the General Allocation grant program.

Very truly yours,



Susan A. Maunello

County Administrative Officer

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cc: Planning Department
Redevelopment Agency
Public **Works** Department
Human Resources Agency

SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL Saturday, January 19, 2008

Public Notices	Public Notices
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At this time, the County of Santa Cruz is preparing to submit an application for General Allocation grant funds for a maximum of \$500,000 pending release of the General Allocation NOFA.

Typically, up to \$500,000 per year may be awarded from the General Allocation and also the Economic Development Allocation components. Grants up to \$70,000 per year are awarded from the General Planning and Technical Assistance Allocation and \$70,000 per year from the Economic Development Planning and Technical Assistance Allocation. The Economic Development Over-the-Counter Allocation can award up to \$250,000 per year. A NOFA is issued for the Native American Allocation for areas where concentrations of low income Native Americans live, who are not part of a federally recognized Indian tribe or Rancheria. A NOFA for Colonia's funding is issued for designated communities within 150 miles of the Mexican American border.

Major activity categories that qualify under the various CDBG allocations include general and economic development; planning and technical assistance; community facilities; public services; public works; and housing acquisition, new construction and rehabilitation. Eligible activities paid for with State CDBG funds must meet one or more of the three national objectives listed in CDBG federal statutes as follows: benefit to low income households or persons; elimination of slums and blight; or meeting urgent community development need (a need from a state or federally declared disaster).

Note: The public may attend the public hearing and/or comment on this matter. Testimony may be presented in person or submitted in written form prior to the hearing and made a part of the hearing record.

If any person challenges an action taken on the foregoing matter(s) in court, they may be limited to raising only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence delivered to the Board of Supervisors at or prior to the public hearing.

The County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Questions regarding accommodation under the ADA should be directed for this hearing to the Clerk of the Board's Office at (831) 454-2323.

The County of Santa Cruz promotes fair housing and makes all its programs available to low and moderate income families regardless of age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual preference, marital status or handicap.

For more information on this subject, contact Chris Hirsch with the County Administrative Office at (831) 454-3409 or the Clerk of the Board Office at (831) 454-2323.

By ORDER OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
 By: Tess E. Fitzgerald
 Chief Deputy Clerk 1/19 2661529

Summary of CDBG Programs

Program Component	Planning & Technical Assistance (PTA) Allocation Program	Economic Development (ED) Allocation Program	General Allocation (GA) Program
<p>Description & Purpose of the Program</p> <p>To prepare studies, surveys, cost estimates, preliminary engineering and similar activities, often used to move forward with the larger Economic Development and General Allocation projects. 2 types: -<i>Project Specific Activities</i> which lead to construction of a physical project and <i>Non-Project Specific Activities</i> which do not result in a physical project.</p>	<p>To create jobs that will benefit low-moderate income individuals and to support businesses that create these jobs. 2 types: -<i>Over-the-Counter (OTC)</i>. Loans to employers for activities that will create/retain permanent jobs and for infrastructure improvements necessary to create, expand or retain a business that will create/retain jobs. -<i>Economic Enterprise (EE)</i> - 2 types: <i>Business Assistance</i> - Business loans and infrastructure grants. <i>Microenterprise</i> - Assistance to businesses with 5 or fewer employees.</p>	<p>To facilitate public works projects, community facility projects, public service programs and housing projects including rehabilitation, acquisition and new construction to benefit low-moderate individuals and households.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">↑</p>

Program Component	Planning & Technical Assistance (PTA) Allocation Program	Economic Development (ED) Allocation Program	General Allocation (GA) Program
<p>Eligible Activities</p> <p>-<i>Project Specific</i> activities lead to physical development of a project such as construction of a home ownership project, development of a food distribution center, rehab of a public building to comply with ADA, development of a new park or replacement of playground equipment, establishment of an assessment district to install a water treatment facility, development of a public parking facility for a business district, etc..</p> <p>-<i>Non-Project Specific</i> activities include development of a working model for a community land trust, an exterior housing condition survey, conducting an income survey to determine whether or not a project qualifies for Economic Development or General Allocation funds, development of a master drainage plan, conducting a hydro geologic study.</p>	<p>- <i>OTC</i> funds provide loans to businesses and developers for construction, equipment, working capital, land acquisition, privately owned on-site improvements, loan guarantees; loans to businesses for business start-ups; grants to cities/counties for publicly owned infrastructure/site improvements and for small business incubators.</p> <p>-<i>Business Assistance</i> funds provide loans to businesses and developers for activities similar to the OTC program.</p> <p>- <i>Microenterprise</i> funds provide technical assistance and business loans, technical and financial assistance and general support such as childcare, transportation and counseling to businesses of 5 or fewer employees.</p> <p>An application can include both a Business Assistance component and a Microenterprise component.</p>	<p>- <i>Public Works</i> projects include acquisition, construction, rehab and installation of projects such as water treatment facilities, drainage project, flood mitigation.</p> <p>- <i>Community Facilities</i> include acquisition, rehab or new construction of buildings and grounds for public purposes such as training, health services, education, recreation, nutrition, shelter, day care, temporary housing, fire protection.</p> <p>- <i>Public Services</i> include child care, health care, job training, recreation programs, education, public safety, services to senior citizens, services for homeless persons, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, transportation services and nutritional services.</p> <p>- <i>Housing</i> activities include site clearance, on-site and off-site improvements, site & utility plans, preliminary cost estimates, sketch drawings, etc. CDBG funds are limited for actual construction of housing.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">➔</p>

173

Program Component	Planning & Technical Assistance (PTA) Allocation Program	Economic Development (ED) Allocation Program	General Allocation (GA) Program
Scoring Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PTA grants must meet the TIG requirement (a minimum of 51% of the individuals benefitting from a grant activity must be TIG with a gross income of 80% or less of the county median income). - If a PTA grant will lead to an Economic Development project, applicant must meet the Public Benefit requirement by forecasting the number of jobs that will be created for TIG persons. - Must provide a cash match which would be approximately 3% for Santa Cruz County. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OTC grants must create at least 1 full time job for every \$35,000 of CDBG funds spent or assist businesses that serve at least 1 TIG person for every \$350 of CDBG funds spent. Scoring of applications is based on the percent of countywide unemployment compared to the state average, the ratio of private funds to CDBG funds etc. - <i>Business Assistance and Microenterprise</i> applications are evaluated based on program need (including the relative poverty index and unemployment index); program capacity (relative strength of program design & operators); program effectiveness (including amount of non-state & non-federal funds). At least 51% of the jobs created by assisted businesses must be filled by TIG individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Applicants are compared in terms of populations with incomes below the poverty level. Proposed activities must meet the TIG requirement (activities begin earning points at 51% TIG and must achieve 90% TIG to earn all possible points). Points are awarded based on commitment of non-state and federal funds.
Funding	A maximum of \$140,000 per jurisdiction – \$70,000 for an Economic Development PTA and \$70,000 for a General Allocation PTA	In 2007, \$250,000 to \$2.5 million was available per grant application for OTC projects. \$4.5 million was available for <i>Economic Enterprise</i> grants with a maximum of \$500,000 per applicant.	It is likely that the maximum award available per jurisdiction for General Allocation grants will be \$500,000. Up to 2 large projects and a less competitive, smaller project can be included in one application.
Competitiveness	Non-competitive; awarded on a first-come-first-served basis. Funds are depleted quickly.	Highly competitive. The funding cycle for OTC grants is continuous.	Highly competitive
Anticipated NOFA Release Date	July 2008	October 2008	January/February 2008