

Public Hearing – CDBG Funding October 16, 2026

A public hearing was held on Friday, October 16, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 2838 South Park Ave. Lackawanna City Hall. The purpose of the public hearing was to provide citizens a chance to make known their views and/or written proposals on the City of Lackawanna's selection of potential projects to be submitted for possible funding by the Federal Community Development Grant Program.

Mayor Annette Iafallo commenced the public hearing at 1:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Annette Iafallo, Mayor
Grace Marrano, City Clerk
Karl Anderson, 2nd Ward Council Member
Gail Nicholson, Secretary to the Mayor
Gene Olivieri, III, Technology
Christy Cooper, Assistant City Attorney
Dan Geercken, Public Works
Chuck Clark, Director of Development
Peggy Bigaj-Sobol, Comptroller
Tom Nicometo, Director of Purchasing

Citizens present at hearing:

Alex Andrzejewski
M.Lisa Rizzo

Mayor Iafallo welcomed the attendee's and gave a brief statement. Mayor Iafallo stated that as per Municipal Home Rule Law, a Notice of Public Hearing was published in the Buffalo Business First newspaper, the official newspaper of the City of Lackawanna, on October 2, 2026, as well as the Official City Website and City Hall bulletin boards. The Mayor also read the following:

Important CDBG Facts

- The Erie County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a federally funded HUD program administered by the Erie County Planning Department for participating municipalities...in what's termed the consortium.
- Lackawanna is one of 34 municipalities in the consortium, which consists of 2 cities, 21 towns and 11 villages.
 - City of Buffalo and towns of Amherst, Cheektowaga, Hamburg and Tonawanda (and related villages) are not in the consortium. They act alone.
- Lackawanna has been in the CDBG consortium since the early/mid 1990's.
- Erie County receives an annual funding allocation from HUD and selects eligible projects in the consortium community through its planning process – of which this public hearing is part of.
- For consortium communities, CDBG funds generally support improvements benefiting low – and moderate – income residents, typically those addressing slum or blight conditions, or meeting an urgent community development need.

- Eligible work may include sidewalks, public facilities, infrastructure, and neighborhood revitalization.
- HUD limits the county's CDBG funding allocation to public service projects (which are those outside of those noted above) to 15% of its total CDBG grant...which this year is \$3.064M.
- For public service projects, Erie County Planning picks a singular project which benefits a majority of consortium members.
 - 2026 project: Rural Transit Service – which benefitted 18 towns and 7 villages in the consortium.
- For Lackawanna to have complete autonomy in the application of CDBG funds, it would need to:
 - Leave the consortium and become independent
 - Create and/or hire federal grant administration resources
 - Apply separately to HUD for CDBG funding – thereby competing with the County Consortium communities, plus the 5 larger independent municipalities – for funding
 - Comply independently, and at its own cost, with HUD administration, compliance and reporting requirements
- As a member of the consortium, Lackawanna benefits from Erie County managing the entire CDBG process.
- While Lackawanna could separate from the consortium, its ability to compete for resources would be compromised and its ability to fully manage the entire process would be costly and potentially prohibitive.
- That said, its not impossible. However, that is not a decision for this year or even the following.

Comments from attendees:

Alex Andrzejweski – his comments can be seen on our website.

Mayor lafallo adjourned the public hearing at 1:10 p.m.

Grace Marrano
City Clerk – City of Lackawanna