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## Decision on CDBG grant likely next month

**Marlborough applies for money for third straight year**

**By Jeff Malachowski**  
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MARLBOROUGH – A decision on the city's request for Community Development Block Grant funding is expected sometime next month.

Officials with the state Department of Housing and Community Development are reviewing the applications and are likely to make their decision by July 18, according to Douglas Bushman, Housing Authority executive director.

The city is seeking \$800,000 – the highest amount communities can request.

Prospective grant monies would pay for the reconstruction of Devens and McEnelly streets – a project city officials said is much

needed. Both roads – located off Washington Street – would be repaved, sidewalks and drainage would be replaced, granite curbing would be added and Americans with Disabilities Act compliant wheelchair ramps would be installed.

Sidewalk and pavement work was last done on the roads more than two decades ago.

The grant requires work to be done in areas that have more than 51 percent of low- and moderate-income residents.

The city plans to use about \$300,000 in potential grant funds and city money for the work. The final cost of the project is still being determined.

With the opioid epidemic continuing to ravage the nation, city officials plan to spend \$42,000 for an anti-opioid program if the city is awarded CDBG money.

The program, titled "Prevention Through Positive Youth Development," will be aimed toward at-risk youths aged 10-17 to improve their decision-making and critical thinking skills in order to avoid drug and alcohol abuse.

The city would also use about \$44,000 to hire a part-time rehab counselor as part of the initiative.

Marlborough's application features a request for \$254,000 to provide loans to homeowners for housing rehab projects that will address safety hazards and allow for emergency repairs. Between six and eight homeowners would be able to improve their homes with the money.

About \$160,000 in potential grant money would be spent on administrative costs and needs.

Marlborough was unsuccessful in its bid for Block Grant funding the past two years. The city jointly

applied with Hudson in 2016 and on its own in 2017.

Enacted in 1974, the Community Development Block Grant program provides money to cities and towns to ensure decent affordable housing, services to the needy and to create jobs. The program has awarded more than \$237 million to Massachusetts communities since 2007.

The city has received \$171,038 for housing rehab projects, \$633,082 for public facilities and \$95,880 for administrative needs through the program the past decade, according to the state Department of Housing and Community Development.

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