



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

December 10, 2013

2013-R-0451

URBAN ACT GRANTS

By: Rute Pinho, Associate Analyst

You asked several questions related to Urban Act grants. Your questions and answers follow below.

What is the application process for local officials seeking an Urban Act grant?

There is no formal application process for local officials seeking Urban Act grants. According to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), local officials wishing to apply for an Urban Act grant should write a letter to the OPM Secretary describing the project for which they seek assistance.

Which towns are eligible for Urban Act grants?

The program is generally open to state-designated (1) distressed municipalities, (2) public investment communities, and (3) urban centers under the state's Plan of Conservation and Development. However, towns that do not meet one of these criteria may still receive Urban Act funds (1) if the State Bond Commission determines that the project in question will help meet specified urban revitalization goals under [CGS § 4-66b](#) or (2) for transit-oriented development projects.

By law, Urban Act funds may be used to finance a wide range of projects, including (1) economic and community development, (2) transportation, (3) housing, (4) recreation development, (5) solid waste disposal, (6) public safety, and (7) social-services-related projects (e.g.,

child day care projects, elderly centers, and shelter facilities for domestic violence victims). The funds may be used either for grants to eligible municipalities or for projects in eligible municipalities ([CGS § 4-66c](#)).

Which entity or agency makes grant decisions?

The grant-making agency depends on the nature of the project. OPM receives and reviews funding requests and then directs them to the agencies with expertise in the area for which a project is seeking assistance. For example, OPM might direct an economic development project to the Department of Economic and Community Development or a solid waste disposal project to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

Are there any specific record-keeping requirements for grantees?

There are no specific record-keeping requirements for entities receiving Urban Act grants, but grantees are subject to (1) the State Single Audit Act and (2) any additional reporting requirements the grant-making agency imposes.

Under the state Single Audit Act, any town or other “nonstate entity” that spends \$300,000 or more in state financial assistance per fiscal year must undergo a comprehensive single audit. If the total state financial assistance it spends in the fiscal year is for a single state program (such as an Urban Act grant), a program-specific audit may be conducted in lieu of a single audit ([CGS § 4-231](#)). In either case, the purpose is to determine whether the recipient spent the funds only for allowable activities and costs. OLR report [2011-R-0473](#) describes the audit requirements in greater detail.

Is there a standard grant award contract?

No. According to OPM, each grant-making agency has its own contract that it enters into with Urban Act grantees. If you would like a copy of a specific agency’s contract, please let us know.

How much has the state appropriated in Urban Act grants in FY 13 and FY 14? List the projects and grant recipients.

The Urban Act program is funded by state general obligation (GO) bonds, rather than state appropriations. Most recently, [PA 13-239](#) authorized \$50 million in GO bonds each year for FY 14 and FY 15 for

the program. As with other bond-funded programs, the State Bond Commission must expressly allocate Urban Act bonds before the funds can be spent.

Table 1 lists the Urban Act bond allocations for FY 13 and FY 14 (to date). As it shows, the Bond Commission has allocated nearly \$78.5 million in Urban Act grants over this period for projects in 30 towns.

Table 1: Urban Act Bond Allocations in FY 13 and FY 14

<i>Town</i>	<i>Date of Bond Allocation</i>	<i>Grantee and Purpose</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Ansonia	August 2012	Ansonia: replace the Ansonia Emergency Operations Center's emergency generator	\$50,000
Bloomfield	August 2012	Bloomfield: remediate a brownfield site on Cottage Grove Road to allow for its redevelopment and construction of a new medical office building	900,000
Bridgeport	August 2012	St. Vincent's College: construct additional classrooms, study areas, and labs	1,800,000
	June 2013	Bridgeport: construct an Andean Bear exhibit at the Beardsley Zoo	1,400,000
	June 2013	Bridgeport: streetscape improvements in six neighborhood revitalization zones	1,000,000
Danbury	June 2013	Regional Hospice and Home Care of Western Connecticut: expand the Healing Hearts Center for Grieving Children and Families	1,200,000
East Hartford	June 2013	East Hartford: study flood plain activity in a specified area	250,000
Glastonbury	July 2012	Glastonbury: construct a boathouse at Riverfront Park	2,242,000
Hamden	June 2013	Hamden, on behalf of the Hamden Economic Development Corporation: renovate, improve, and remediate the former Newhall Community Center for development of a business incubator center	5,000,000
Hartford	October 2012	HBN Front Street District, Inc.: infrastructure improvements associated with the Front Street project	1,500,000*
	August 2012	Hartford Hospital: expand the Center for Education, Simulation and Innovation	10,000,000
	January 2013	Wadsworth Museum of Art: renovate galleries and interior spaces.	3,000,000
	March 2013	Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance, Inc.: renovate the mixed use Zunner Building	250,000
	March 2013	Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network: renovate two unfinished floors into a Learning Lab	1,000,000
	June 2013	Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts: various alterations renovations and improvements	2,000,000
Manchester	April 2013	Community Health Resources: construct a new outpatient mental health clinic	3,000,000
Meriden	October 2012	Meriden: revitalize City Park and Brookside Park	200,000
Middletown	October 2012	Middletown: construct museum building at Veteran's Park	300,000
Naugatuck	April 2013	Naugatuck YMCA: renovations and improvements	317,500

Table 1: -Continued-

Town	Date of Bond Allocation	Grantee and Purpose	Amount
New Britain	August 2012	Wheeler Clinic: relocate a short-term residential center for children in crisis to New Britain from the University of Connecticut Health Center	75,000
	March 2013	Hospital for Special Care: acquire and implement an electronic medical records system	3,600,000
	April 2013	Mount Pleasant Community Education and Training Center: construct a workforce training facility for public housing and low income community residents	1,000,000
	April 2013	Wheeler Clinic: relocate a short-term residential center for children in crisis to New Britain from the University of Connecticut Health Center	103,620
	June 2013	New Britain Museum of American Art: construct an addition and related site improvements	4,000,000
New Haven	April 2013	Connecticut Tennis Center: various upgrades and improvements	258,000
	June 2013	Connecticut Association for the Performing Arts: alterations, renovations, and additions to the Shubert Theater in New Haven	2,000,000
Newtown	January 2013	Newtown Parent Connection, Inc.: renovate space for program operations	500,000*
	June 2013	Newtown: plan and design a new Sandy Hook Elementary School	750,000
Norwalk	August 2012	IWSR Managers, LLC.: construct a parking garage at Wall Street Place	5,000,000
Plainville	April 2013	Plainville: renovate and improve recreational facilities at Paderewski Park	151,285
Putnam	June 2013	Day Kimball Hospital: install emergency generators and replace and upgrade cooling towers, chillers, and related mechanical system improvements	3,500,000
Stamford	January 2013	TL76 Holdings LLC.: environmental remediation and bulkhead replacement on Bateman Way site	7,000,000
	April 2013	TL76 Holdings LLC.: environmental remediation and bulkhead replacement on Bateman Way site	9,000,000
Stonington	July 2012	Mystic Seaport: restore the Charles W. Morgan	500,000
Suffield	July 2012	Suffield: extend water and sewer lines along Route 75	980,000
Tolland	October 2012	Tolland: renovate Tolland High School Stadium	200,000
Torrington	August 2012	Torrington: façade improvement program for local businesses	500,000
Trumbull	July 2012	Trumbull: replace the Nichols Fire Department's emergency generator	93,970
	October 2012	Trumbull: Hillcrest School pool repairs	123,890
Voluntown	June 2013	Voluntown: Gate Street basketball court improvements	50,000
Waterbury	April 2013	Waterbury: match federal funding for construction of a section of the Naugatuck River Greenway	139,000
West Hartford	June 2013	University of Saint Joseph: construct a building for the Center for Integrative Education	4,000,000
West Haven	August 2012	West Haven: transit-oriented development district master plan	200,000
Wethersfield	April 2013	Wethersfield: infrastructure and recreational improvements	500,000
Windham	June 2013	Windham Regional Community Council: retire mortgage debt to free up funds for additional programming	814,500
TOTAL			78,448,765

*Re-allocation of a previous bond allocation
Source: Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA)

In the past 10 years, what Urban Act grants has Windham or any entity within the town received?

As Table 2 shows, since 2004, the state has awarded nearly \$13.7 million in Urban Act grants to the town of Windham and entities within the town.

Table 2: Urban Act Grants Awarded to Windham Since 2004

<i>Date of Bond Allocation</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Amount</i>
January 2006	Grant to Windham to satisfy a court judgment related to the condemnation by eminent domain of the Windham Mills complex for economic development purposes	\$2,000,000
March 2006	Grant to Windham for town hall code improvements	1,000,000
October 2006	Grant to Generations Family Health Center for acquisition of and renovations to 1315 Main Street, Willimantic	1,400,000
December 2008	Grant to Covenant Soup Kitchen in Willimantic for roof repairs and boiler replacement	85,000
July 2011	Grant to Windham Hospital to develop a 30,000 square foot medical office complex	8,354,500
June 2013	Grant-in-aid to the Windham Regional Community Council to retire its mortgage debt to free up funds for additional programming	814,500
TOTAL		13,654,000

Source: OFA

PA 07-7, June Special Session authorized \$650,000 in bonds to restore historic properties along Main Street in Willimantic. Was this funded by Urban Act funds or some other source? What must Windham do to receive these funds?

The \$650,000 bond authorization to which you refer was not an Urban Act grant. It was a bond authorization to the Commission on Culture and Tourism to fund a grant to Willimantic for the specified project. The bonds for this grant have not been allocated. In order for the town of Windham to receive these funds, the State Bond Commission would need to expressly allocate the bonds.

RP:ts