

DAVID P. FANSLAU, M.G.A., ICMA-CM
COUNTY MANAGER

TEL: 845-807-0450
FAX: 845-807-0460



SULLIVAN COUNTY MANAGER'S OFFICE

SULLIVAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
100 NORTH STREET, P.O. BOX 5012
MONTICELLO, NY 12701-5192

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County Grant Program Targets “Main Street” and “Agri-Businesses” Micro-Enterprises *Applications Now Available for New Small Business Grant Program*

Monticello –County Manager David Fanslau announced today that applications are available for a new Microenterprise Assistance Program (MAP), made possible with an \$185,000 grant from New York State’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Economic Development Program. The grant is being administered by the Sullivan County Division of Planning and Environmental Management.

“The program will provide grants between \$5,000 and \$35,000 for business start-ups or existing enterprises with five or fewer employees. The MAP will target two types of small businesses of importance to the County: 1) “Main Street” goods and services located within downtown areas of village or hamlet business districts, and 2) “Agri-Business” enterprises, which refers to farms, agriculture-support businesses, and businesses that process local farm-based products,” stated Fanslau.

This dual focus leverages additional funding available through the County’s Main Street Revolving Loan Fund and Agri-Business Revolving Loan Funds. “The goal is to help bridge the gap for small businesses looking to get started and to take advantage of other funding and support programs that are available,” stated Planning Commissioner Luiz Aragon.

The Microenterprise Assistance Program is a collaboration of Sullivan County’s Division of Planning and the Center for Workforce Development, Sullivan Renaissance—a program of the Gerry Foundation, the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce and Liberty Community Development Corporation. Funding comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban

Development (HUD) through CDBG funds administered by New York State Homes and Community Renewal. Conditions of the grant include requiring participating businesses to contribute at least 10% of the cost of the project. Also, businesses must create at least one new job that can be offered to or made available to persons from low- or moderate-income (LMI) households. New positions created must start by September 2013.

Another condition for receiving the grant is that businesses agree to participate in an Entrepreneurial Training Program. Terri Ward, President of CEO of the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce, stated, “The partners have worked hard to assemble a roster of trainers and presentations meant to benefit small businesses in every stage of their development. The classes explore topics from developing a business plan to marketing your product, financing your plans, and finding, hiring and managing employees.”

The deadline for grant applications is Friday, February 3, 2012. Sullivan County Planning will hold two public information sessions on the MAP program, Thursday, January 12 at 6PM in the Government Center in Monticello and Wednesday, January 18, 2012, at 6PM in the Callicoon Town Hall.

For more information or to request an application, contact the Sullivan County Division of Planning at (845) 807-0541 or by email at planning@co.sullivan.ny.us.

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