Cumberland County Community Development Program
2014 CDBG Planning Program Application
Community Cover Page

Project Title Town of Raymond Manufacturing Incubator Planning Project

Lead Community Town of Raymond

Additional Communities N/A

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Amount of CDBG Funds Requested $30,000

Total Estimated Project Cost $31,200

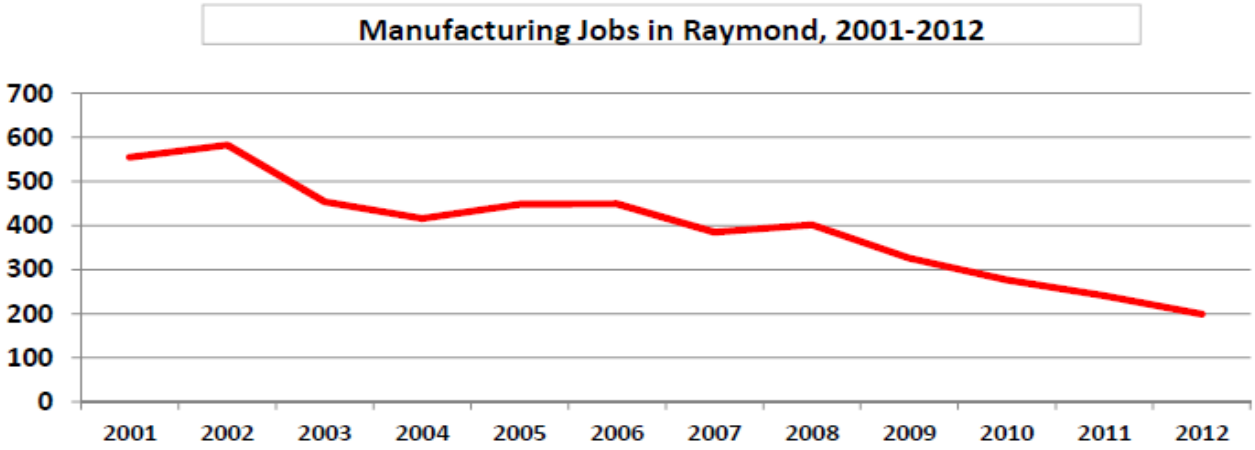
Name of Authorized Official Donald Willard, Town Manager

Signature of Authorized Official Don Willard

1. **Describe the community problem or needs.**

a. ***Scope, magnitude, and severity of the problem*.**

On April 22, 2013, SPX Corporation of Charlotte, North Carolina, parent company of Dielectric Communications, announced that it would close its plant in Raymond, Maine, resulting in the loss of 55 jobs. Raymond's largest employer, Dielectric Communications has manufactured radio and television antennas in town since World War II. While the actual shutdown was averted thanks to a merger with a competitor, the announcement was a wake-up call to the community. Since 2001, Raymond has lost 356 manufacturing jobs through plant closures and layoffs.



While the Town of Raymond is powerless to stop the global downsizing of manufacturing, we propose a unique solution to harness the creativity and talent of residents in the Sebago Lake Region who already know how to create products: the creation of a manufacturing incubator in the now vacant, 44,000-square foot former Chipco International Plant located at 1281 Roosevelt Trail. This facility would provide users with access to technology for the design and development of prototypes as well as space for small-to-medium scale manufacturing. The Town is seeking CDBG funds to prepare a business plan for this complex project.

b. ***Describe past efforts, if any, to address the problem.***

Over the past decade, Raymond has played a proactive role in economic development through the construction of public infrastructure, including a business corridor water line extension from Windham, as well as sidewalk, and streetscape improvements in the town's business district along Route 302. In 2001, the town co-sponsored a State CDBG grant for the purchase of machinery and equipment at Dielectric.

The University of Southern Maine (USM) has developed a research & development program called Campus Ventures, which provides manufacturing assistance to businesses utilizing equipment and laboratory space at the university. In the past 3 ½ years, the program has completed 50+ R&D projects and fully-commercialized several exciting technologies. USM, however, lacks a "hand-off" partner to support the growth and success of new start-ups. Through this proposal, Raymond will develop a long-term partnership with USM that will benefit the Sebago Lakes region by leveraging the university's R&D expertise, network connections, and programming. Indeed, there is already a pipeline of clients in the Campus Ventures program who could serve as potential tenants for the manufacturing incubator.

c. ***Does the problem have specific impacts on low/moderate income households or low/moderate income neighborhoods?***

The manufacturing incubator will help low-to-moderate income residents throughout the Sebago Lake Region start microenterprises that provide them with part-time and full-time employment. Potential users might be unemployed residents laid off from their manufacturing jobs; creative innovators who work in their garages, basements, and barns; or students with a business start-up idea. With access to technology related to advanced manufacturing processes such as 3-Dimensional Printing and CNC machining, users will be able to produce a relatively inexpensive prototype out of wood, metal, plastic, and other materials. Along with access to small business assistance, users will have the "proof-of-concept" necessary to seek financing for their microenterprises or conduct limited manufacturing runs. The proposed facility is also large enough to provide long-term production space for entrepreneurs and microenterprises.

d. ***Why are CDBG funds critical to the planning activity's success?***

Through the Raymond Revitalization Committee, supported by Raymond's professional staff and Board of Selectmen, an experienced and knowledgeable group has been assembled and is posed to pursue the creation of the first manufacturing incubator in Maine. These volunteers, including several with extensive, successful entrepreneurial start up experience, need the focus and direction that a professional business plan will provide in order to move forward with this project.

2. **What is the strategy to complete the planning project?**

a. ***Describe the planning tasks to be undertaken***

The Town of Raymond will seek the services of a professional consulting firm to develop the incubator's business plan, which will include the following components:

- Vision and mission statement
- Market analysis of preferred mix of equipment, services, and clients
- Ownership, governance, and operations plan
- Financial plan for capital, renovation, operations, and maintenance costs
- Preliminary design and layout of facility

b. ***Outline the project's schedule***

July-September, 2014

- Establish an action team of residents, business leaders, and regional interests
- Disseminate RFP for consulting services
- Hire consultant

October-December, 2014

- Host public meeting
- Develop vision and mission statement
- Visit similar facilities in Maine and other New England states

January-June, 2015

- Develop individual components of business plan

July-September, 2015

- Host public forum

- Publish final report

c. ***Are community partnerships established and engaged in the project?***

The Town of Raymond has developed three dynamic partnerships to move this project forward.

Raymond Revitalization Committee: This group of 30+ business leaders meets on a monthly basis to pursue ideas to improve the town's economic climate and business district.

University of Southern Maine (USM): USM's Campus Ventures Program is committed to helping companies improve their manufacturing processes, democratizing access to 3-D printing technology, and developing a publicly accessible manufacturing incubator in Southern Maine.

Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG): The county's regional planning agency assists the town with specific economic development priorities, including staffing the town's economic development task force.

3. **Convey your community's readiness to proceed.**

a. ***How has the project been conveyed to community residents?***

The Raymond Revitalization Committee has devoted several meetings to the concept. To pursue the project, Town of Raymond staff and volunteers conducted a site visit to USM's College of Science, Technology, and Health, participated in USM's DigiFab Conference on November 1, 2013, and hosted a site visit to the project's location at the former Chipco International Plant on Route 302, which included representatives from the Board of Selectmen, Raymond Revitalization Committee, Cumberland County Government, USM, GPCOG, and Ransom Consulting. In addition, a presentation on the project has been scheduled for the Raymond Board of Selectmen on February 11, 2014, which will be broadcast live on Raymond's local access channel. Letters of support from both the Board of Selectmen and Raymond Revitalization Committee have been included with this application.

The development of a manufacturing incubator has been identified as a High Impact Project in the 2014-2018 Regional Economic Development Strategy produced by the Greater Portland Council of Governments. From 2011 to 2013, over 200 business and community leaders in Greater Portland and the Sebago Lakes region were involved in the development of this plan.

b. **Are matching funds available for the project?**

Business development experts from GPCOG and the University of Southern Maine have agreed to participate in the planning process, providing professional consulting in-kind services.

c. **Are staff and/or consultants available to complete the project?**

Yes. The Town of Raymond will provide support through administrative and support services. USM will provide professional staff and faculty expertise as well as student research to plan, implement, and operate the facility. According to USM, the following types of consultants may be interested in submitting proposals on this work: architects; consulting engineers (mechanical, electrical, structural/civil, environmental); and construction managers & subcontractors.

Appendix II: Budget

Planning Grant – Program Budget				
Cost Category	**CDBG Funds**	**Municipal Funds**	**Other Funds**	**Total**
Consultant Services	$30,000			
Advertising		$500		
Public Meetings		$500		
Printing		$100		
Mailings		$100		
Other				
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
Total Costs	$30,000	$1,200		
Provide the basis for determination of budget amounts:				
The estimates are based off of experience with administering similarly scoped projects.				