



# Community Development Fund Guide to Unified Scoring Committee (replacing Regional Review Committee structure) Texas Administrative Code Proposed Rules

## Goals

- Effectively and efficiently use the state and federal resources available to administer the TxCDBG program, toward the ultimate goal of sustainably providing funding to small and rural communities; and
- Incorporate the project priorities that are important to each region, and which vary across the state.

## Unified Scoring Committee

- The committee will meet once every two years to establish objective scoring criteria for the CD Fund;
- Members will be elected / appointed local officials from non-entitlement communities; and
- Members will be nominated by the governing body of each COG region (24 total members)

## Scoring Decision Making

Scoring Metric	Who will select the scoring criteria?	Example:
Regional Project Priority	Each COG region	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , or 3 <sup>rd</sup> Priority Project Types: Water & sewer projects, Community centers, etc.
Objective Scoring Criteria	Unified Scoring Committee	Previous funding per community, poverty data, unemployment, etc.
State Criteria	TDA	Past performance on TxCDBG grants, HUD goals

## Proposed Rules

- Proposed rules to implement the unified scoring committee process were published December 27, 2019 and can be found at: <https://www.sos.texas.gov/texreg/archive/December272019/Proposed%20Rules/4.AGRICULTURE.html#18>
- Public Hearings will be held:
 

January 22, 3:00pm Austin Public Library, Carver Branch 1161 Angelina Street Austin, Texas	January 27, 10:30am Via webinar (see TDA website for details)
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- Written public comments will be accepted through 5:00 p.m. on February 3, 2020:
 

By mail:	Suzanne Barnard, Director for CDBG Programs, Texas Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 12847, Austin, Texas 78711
By email:	RuleComments@TexasAgriculture.gov

## History

- Texas CDBG and the CD Fund were created in the early 1980s. At that time, Regional Review Committees were established to assist with scoring applications within each region.
  - RRCs frequently used subjective criteria to score projects on factors that could not be readily captured by statistics. Ex. local effort to address needs.
  - In the early 2000s, HUD issued a finding and required the process to be more objective so that applicants could clearly understand and anticipate how an application would be scored.
- Since approx. 2007, RRCs have selected “objective and verifiable” scoring criteria for each region.
  - Overall, the goals of the selected criteria are consistent across the state: allow all communities a chance access funding, specifically assist communities with limited resources, help those that help themselves.
  - Under the existing system, each RRC created its own definitions and calculations for scoring. TDA then managed each region’s scoring as one of 24 separate programs, not just during the initial application review but throughout the grant cycle.
- RRCs are valued locally, but participation is low.
  - 9 of the 24 COGs formally declined to serve as the support staff for the RRC for the 2018 Program Year, and several other COGs have since indicated they were considering the same.
  - In 2018, 12 RRC public hearings were attended by the bare minimum number of members, and 11 were unable to make quorum without the use of proxy attendees in place of members.
- In 2019 TDA began plans to replace the RRC process with a unified scoring process that preserves regional input.
  - TDA conducted 10 informal public meetings, including 5 in Austin and 5 in communities across the state.
  - After receiving stakeholder input, TDA developed the details of the unified scoring committee.