



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Grants Management Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Elizabeth H. Tyler, FAICP, Community Development Director
FROM: Kelly H. Mierkowski, Manager, Grants Management Division
DATE: February 24, 2017
SUBJECT: **CDBG Public Service Funding Priorities as part of the Consolidated Social Service Funding Pool (FY 2017-2018)**

Description

In its advisory capacity to the Urbana City Council, one of the responsibilities of the Community Development Commission (CDC) is to develop priorities for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding portion of the City's Consolidated Social Service Funding Pool.

Issues

The issue is for the Community Development Commission to identify priorities for allocation of the CDBG Public Service Funds included in the FY 2017-2018 Annual Action Plan (AAP).

Background

In September 1996, the City of Urbana and Cunningham Township established a Consolidated Social Service Funding (CSSF) Pool to provide grants to non-profit organizations that sponsor social services for Urbana residents. The consolidated fund combines funds from the following sources: City of Urbana general funds, Cunningham Township funds, and City of Urbana CDBG funds.

This year, an estimated amount of \$5,000 in CDBG funding will be budgeted in the CSSF pool, which is the same as the \$5,000 allocated last fiscal year (FY 2016-2017). The total combined pool allocation available for FY 2016-2017 was \$250,000, with the CDBG allocation of \$5,000. For this year, the City of Urbana general fund allocation and Cunningham Township funding will be determined at a later date. It is anticipated that the total pool of funds available to be allocated through the CSSF process will be approximately the same amount that was available for FY 2016-2017, which was \$250,000.

The Grants Management Division of the City's Department of Community Development Services administers a single application process, and funds are granted to non-profit organizations by joint decision of the Urbana City Council and the Cunningham Township Board.

All grants that are awarded through the consolidated funding pool are monitored throughout the year for eligibility of disbursements and compliance. The Grants Management Division monitors all programs funded through CDBG and the City of Urbana General Fund, and the Cunningham Township Supervisor's Office monitors all grants funded with Township funds.

The Consolidated Social Service Funding applications for FY 2017-2018 will be made available Monday, March 6, 2017. The deadline for submission of completed applications is scheduled for Friday, April 7, 2017 by 4:00 p.m. Grant allocations will be formalized through approval of the City and Township budgets in June 2017.

Federal regulations require that use of CDBG funds allocated for public services be consistent with needs identified by the City in its Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. It is the role of the CDC to determine which of these needs should be addressed during the planned program year and to prioritize the same by importance to the community. Last year, the CDC designated the priorities in the following order beginning with highest importance: (1) Youth & Seniors, (2) Homelessness, and (3) Special (Needs) Populations.

In order to address these priorities, in FY 2016-2017 CDBG Public Service funding was provided to the following agencies: Champaign County Regional Planning Commission Youth Assessment Center [Youth/Seniors] and PACE, Inc. (Persons Assuming Control of their Environment) Personal Assistance Program [Special (Needs) Population & Homelessness].

Options

The CDC may determine funding priorities for public services to be funded with CDBG that are related to the following goals and priority needs referenced in the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan:

Specific Goals:

1. Provide decent affordable housing opportunities
2. Address barriers to affordable housing
3. Preserve existing affordable housing supply
4. Coordinate with the Housing Authority
5. Support services and training for low-income persons
6. Support homeless needs
7. Reduce lead exposure risk
8. Support infrastructure
9. Preserve Consortium neighborhoods.

Priority Needs:

1. Affordable Housing, which is associated with providing decent affordable housing, addressing barriers to affordable housing, preserving existing affordable housing supply, coordinating with the Housing Authority, supporting services and training for low-income persons, and supporting homeless needs.

2. Homeless Prevention and Service, which is associated with supporting homeless needs.
3. Non-Homeless Special Needs, which is associated with addressing barriers to affordable housing, and supporting services and training for low-income persons.
4. Community Development Needs, which is associated with supporting services and training for low-income persons, supporting homeless needs, reducing lead exposure risk, supporting infrastructure improvements, and preserving Consortium neighborhoods.

Of the goals and priority needs listed above, Affordable Housing, Coordinate with Housing Authority, Reduce Lead Exposure Risk, Infrastructure, and Preserve Consortium Neighborhoods are addressed through other CDBG and HOME grants, as well as the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), Supportive Housing Program, and the Blight Reduction Program.

The goal and priority need of Affordable Housing is covered by the HOME Program, specifically through the Tenant Based Rental Assistance program and funding for Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) like Habitat for Humanity. For multifamily affordable housing projects such as Crystal View Townhomes and Highland Green, the City has coordinated with the Housing Authority of Champaign County, and these developments have been funded in part with HOME funds.

Through the City's Housing Rehabilitation programs, such as the Emergency Grant, Access Grant, and Senior Repair Program (funded with CDBG), and the Whole House Program (funded with HOME), the City ensures that the risk of lead exposure is reduced in the home. In partnership with the City's Public Works Department, CDBG funds are used for infrastructure projects in targeted areas of the City, such as the Census Tract 53 Street Lights, Harvey Street Improvements, Lanore/Adams/Fairlawn Multiuse Path, and Hunter/Austin Street Lights.

To preserve Consortium neighborhoods, the Blight Reduction Program aims to decrease preventable foreclosures and stabilize neighborhoods, and provide funding to target blighted, vacant, residential properties in specific communities for demolition, greening, and eventual reuse, repurpose and/or redevelopment.

Through the Emergency Solutions Grant and Supportive Housing Program grant, the City administers these programs on behalf of social service agencies that provide shelter and services to homeless individuals and families. The City also uses a portion of CDBG Public Service funds to run a transitional housing program for homeless families with children.

The goal and priority need of supporting services and training for low-income persons is not otherwise covered by other city grant programs. The goal and priority need of supporting homeless needs is covered by CDBG, ESG, and SHP grant programs, but cuts to these programs have reduced the number of homeless individuals and families that can be served.

Fiscal Impacts

The estimated \$5,000 in CDBG CSSF funding will be included in the proposed City of Urbana and Urbana HOME Consortium FY 2017-2018 AAP. These funds will be combined with City of Urbana general funds and/or Cunningham Township funds for Consolidated Social Service Funding Pool grants.

Recommendations

Staff recommends that the Community Development Commission choose the following options for funding priorities for FY 2017-2018: (1) Support services and training for low-income persons, and (2) Support homeless needs. These priorities are suggested because they provide for a larger range of funding possibilities and will work to address the needs that are not addressed through other programs.

Memorandum Prepared By:

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