



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:17-4612

Agenda Item Number: 26.

Agenda Date: 9/21/2017

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Human Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Melody Woosley

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

FY 2017 Housing Counseling Grant

SUMMARY:

This ordinance authorizes acceptance of FY 2017 Housing Counseling grant funds in the amount of \$24,661.00 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the period October 1, 2016 to March 31, 2018, approves a budget, and authorizes the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS), or her designee, to execute documents in connection with this grant and accept additional funds if awarded.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Department of Human Services (DHS) Fair Housing/Housing Counseling Program (FHHC) has provided housing counseling services to homeowners as a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Certified Housing Counseling agency since 1979. FHHC supports the delivery of a wide variety of housing counseling services to homebuyers, homeowners, low to moderate income renters, and those in danger of or experiencing homelessness. Services are provided regardless of income.

The primary goal of FHHC is to improve housing stability by:

- Providing public education to reduce discrimination in housing
- Educating landlords and tenants regarding their legal rights and responsibilities
- Expanding homeownership opportunities and improve access to affordable housing
- Helping homeowners prevent or resolve mortgage delinquency, default and foreclosure and maintain homeownership

- Providing relocation assistance in the event of displacement
- Connecting residents to emergency assistance, financial empowerment to prevent homelessness

Ordinance No. 2016-03-31-0227 authorized DHS to apply for a combined FY 2016 and FY 2017 Housing Counseling Grant. On July 14, 2017, DHS received notice from HUD that continued funding for the FY 2017 Housing Counseling Grant was available through March 31, 2018.

HUD Housing Counseling funding augments DHS's Fair Housing Program. For FY 2017, DHS received \$245,774.00 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to operate the Fair Housing Program as part of the FY17 HUD Action Plan and \$21,716.00 in HUD Housing Counseling funding for a total program budget of \$267,490.00. Combined funding provided 1,195 households with fair housing/housing counseling services. The HUD Housing Counseling Program, alone, provided 48 households with housing counseling during the 18 month period of the grant, October 1, 2015 to March 31, 2017. Funding was also used to conduct community workshops focused on first-time apartment renters, attended by over 30 individuals.

ISSUE:

This ordinance authorizes acceptance of FY 2017 Housing Counseling grant funds in the amount of \$24,661.00 from HUD for the period October 1, 2016 to March 31, 2018, and approves a budget. The HUD Housing Counseling funding augments the Department's Fair Housing Program. Additionally, as a HUD Housing Counseling Grantee, DHS Fair Housing and Housing Counselors have access to specialized training to become HUD Certified Housing Counselors. Currently, 3 DHS staff have this certification and are able to provide rental assistance and foreclosure prevention counseling to facilitate housing stability and prevent homelessness.

For FY 2018, DHS received \$246,600 in CDBG funds for the Fair Housing Program as part of the FY18 HUD Action Plan approved on August 3, 2017, Ordinance No. 2017-08-03-0521 and upon Council approval, \$24,661.00 in HUD Housing Counseling funds for a total program budget of \$271,261.00. Combined funding will provide 1,400 households with fair housing/housing counseling services and prevent 140 foreclosures. DHS anticipates serving 65 households with FY 2017 Housing Counseling funding of \$24,661.

ALTERNATIVES:

If this ordinance is not approved, another grantee would need to be identified by HUD to provide service in this area. The process of identifying a new grantee to implement services would delay the provision of housing counseling services. In addition, the discontinuation of this grant may affect the City's ability to secure HUD Housing Counseling grant funding in the future.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance authorizes the acceptance of FY 2017 Housing Counseling Grant funds in the amount of \$24,661.00 from HUD for the period October 1, 2016 to March 31, 2018, and approved a FY 2017 budget. This ordinance also authorizes the Director of DHS, or her designee, to accept additional funds and execute documents in connection with this grant. There is no associated personnel complement.

There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this ordinance to authorize the acceptance of FY 2017 Housing Counseling Grant funds in the amount of \$24,661.00 for the grant period of October 1, 2016 to March 31, 2018.