



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:14-639

Agenda Item Number: 7.

Agenda Date: 4/3/2014

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Human Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Melody Woosley

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT:

Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant

SUMMARY:

This ordinance authorizes the submission of a FY 2014 and FY 2015 Housing Counseling Grant application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Housing Counseling Program, for the period of October 1, 2013 to March 31, 2016. This ordinance also accepts, upon award, funding up to \$70,000.00, approves the FY 2014 budget, and authorizes the Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS), or her designee, to execute documents in connection with this grant.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Through its Fair Housing Program, DHS has offered housing counseling services to homeowners as a HUD Certified Housing Counseling agency since 1979, including foreclosure prevention counseling. The Housing Counseling Program supports the delivery of a wide variety of housing counseling services to homebuyers, homeowners, low to moderate income renters, and the homeless. There is no income requirement for clients to receive housing counseling services.

The primary objectives of the Fair Housing Program are to improve financial literacy, expand homeownership opportunities, improve access to affordable housing, and preserve homeownership. Counselors provide guidance and advice to help families and individuals improve their housing conditions and meet the responsibilities of tenancy and homeownership. Additionally, counselors may provide counseling services to homeowners to prevent or resolve mortgage delinquency, default, and foreclosure. During FY 2013, 1,932 San Antonio families received the program services and 180 foreclosures were prevented. DHS certified housing counseling staff also conducted community education presentations including public awareness of predatory lending practices and mortgage scam alert activities.

ISSUE:

Funding for the FY 2014 and FY 2015 Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant Program is intended to support HUD-approved housing counseling agencies to respond flexibly to the needs of residents and neighborhoods and deliver a wide variety of housing counseling services to homebuyers, homeowners, renters, and the homeless. The program plays an integral role in the continued stabilization of our local housing market by helping individuals and families obtain housing, and stay in their homes through responsible homeownership or affordable rental housing.

With the single FY 2014 - FY 2015 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), HUD will competitively award housing counseling grant funding for both FY 2014 and FY 2015. HUD will use applications received under this FY 2014 and FY 2015 NOFA, to make awards for FY2014, utilizing FY 2014 appropriations. The Initial Period of Performance for the FY 2014 award is retroactive from October 1, 2013 through March, 31 2014.

For FY 2015, HUD would use the same NOFA and methodologies to award FY 2015 funds, subject to availability of appropriations and any other authority that may govern the award of FY 2015 funds.

This NOFA allocates approximately \$40.5 million for the HUD Housing Counseling Program with an estimated average award to not exceed \$35,000.00 for individual housing counseling programs for FY 2014. Historically, funding for DHS has been just above the national average:

Fiscal Year	Total Award
2011	\$40,408.00
2012	\$16,193.00
2013	\$21,119.00

If approved, an application will be submitted to HUD on April 7, 2014. The Housing Counseling Program projects it will serve approximately 2,900 families during FY 2014.

The goals and objectives of Housing Counseling Program are consistent with the city's commitment to Family Well-Being. The program provides needed supports to citizens to ensure stability of residence, expand homeownership opportunities, and prevents homelessness by providing emergency support services.

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 for up to 2,900 families. In addition, the discontinuation of this grant may affect the City's ability to secure HUD Housing Counseling funding in the future.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance authorizes the submission of a Housing Counseling Grant application and acceptance of funds, upon award, of up to \$70,000.00 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the period October 1, 2013 to March 31, 2016. This ordinance also approves the FY 2014 budget. There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this ordinance authorizing the submission of a FY 2014 and FY 2015 Comprehensive Housing Counseling Grant application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the period of October 1, 2013 to March 31, 2016 and acceptance upon award of amounts up to \$70,000.00; and approving the FY 2014 budget.