



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:20-5580

Agenda Item Number: 24.

Agenda Date: 10/29/2020

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Human Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Melody Woosley

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-wide

SUBJECT:

2021 Community Services Block Grant & 2020 Discretionary Funding for Texas Eviction Diversion Program

SUMMARY:

This ordinance authorizes the submission of the 2021 Community Action Plan grant application and acceptance of Community Services Block Grant funds upon award, of up to \$2,051,128.00 from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, and authorizes a budget and personnel complement of 26 grant funded positions. The ordinance also authorizes the acceptance of Community Services Block Grant Discretionary funds upon award, of up to \$600,000.00 from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs for the period October 12, 2020 through September 30, 2021 to implement a pilot program of the Texas Eviction Diversion Program (TEDP) in Bexar County.

This ordinance also authorizes the Director of the Department of Human Services to initiate, negotiate, and execute any and all necessary documents and a grant contract to effectuate the acceptance of this grant, and to execute contract amendments pertaining to this contract, to include a) carry-over funds, when ascertained and approved by the funding agency through a revised notice of award; b) line item budget revisions authorized by the funding agency; c) modifications to the performance measures authorized by the funding agency and listed in the contract so long as the terms of the amendment stay within the general parameters of the intent of the grant; d) no cost extensions; e) amendments which will provide supplemental grant funds to the grant by the funding agency in an amount up to 20% of the total amount awarded to the grant; f) reimbursement increases of administrative funds for each participant served; g) amendments funding one time equipment purchases or defined program services; and h) changes in regulations mandated by the funding agency.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City of San Antonio, Department of Human Services (DHS) is the designated Community Action Agency (CAA) and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) eligible entity for San Antonio and Bexar County. DHS has operated the Community Action Program since 1979. The Community Action Advisory Board (CAAB) acts in an advisory capacity regarding implementation of Community Action Programs. The CAAB is a tripartite board consisting of 1) representatives of the low income population by geographical area; 2) representatives of non-profit organizations in San Antonio; and 3) public officials.

The primary goal of the CSBG funding is to transition individuals and families out of poverty and promote financial self-sufficiency to reduce poverty in the Bexar County area for residents at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). CSBG funding is provided by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with oversight by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). Through the DHS-Training for Job Success (TFJS) Program, education and employment support services are provided as part of intensive case management. Program participants are enrolled in high-demand occupations. Educational support services include: tuition assistance, textbooks, supplies, uniforms, equipment, rent and utility assistance as well as referrals to address barriers to student success. Employment support includes: resume writing, interviewing skills, interview preparation and assistance with job searches. In Calendar year 2019, program graduates average annual earnings increased from \$15,078 to \$58,679.17 post program, an increase of 389%. Case managers work with committed program participants to complete individual assessments, develop case management service plans, arrange for necessary services and follow-up and monitor participants' status to help them achieve a sustained family income above 125% of the FPL. DHS anticipates serving approximately 50,000 individuals with CSBG in FY 2021 through the TFJS program, the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, the Emergency Utility Assistance program, and Financial Counseling programs.

The primary goal of the \$600,000 in CSBG Discretionary funding is to operate an Eviction Diversion Pilot Program as part of the Texas Eviction Diversion Program (TEDP), which is intended to help Texas residents behind on their rent and facing eviction because of impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the program is to provide up to six months of rental assistance to allow residents stay in their homes. This is a temporary program in partnership between the Texas Office of Court Administration, the Texas Supreme Court and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). The CSBG Discretionary Funds would be used to pay the full contracted rent that is past due, and the remainder may be used to pay for subsequent months of assistance. Locally, the program will be operated by the Neighborhood and Housing Services Department in close coordination with teams assisting residents at the Bexar County Justice of the Peace courts. The pilot program will serve residents county-wide.

ISSUE:

As part of the annual planning process required by TDHCA, CSBG eligible entities must conduct a public hearing prior to submitting a proposed 2021 budget and Community Action Plan. A public hearing was held on Sept 24, 2020. Also, on this date, the CAAB approved the Program Year 2021 Community Action Plan that includes Individual, Family and Community National Performance Indicators, Targets and the proposed Program Year 2021 budget.

A final award amount from TDHCA will be provided upon authorization of the Fiscal Year 2021 Federal Budget. As requested by the state, DHS proposed a budget based on 2021 estimated CSBG allocations in the amount of \$2,051,128. The CSBG contract with TDHCA for Program Year 2021 will be executed once the federal budget is approved or a Continuing Resolution is authorized, and final award amount is received by the

ALTERNATIVES:

The City of San Antonio is the only designated CSBG eligible entity for Bexar County and no other agency may apply for these funds. If the proposed ordinance is not approved, services provided by the City of San Antonio may be delayed while TDHCA undergoes a process to identify a new designated entity for Bexar County. Discretionary funds allocated to the Texas Eviction Diversion Program (TEDP) pilot program may be reallocated to other Texas communities.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance authorizes the submission of the 2021 Community Action Plan grant application and acceptance of funds, upon award, of \$2,051,128.00 in 2021 CSBG funding from TDHCA for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, and approves budget and personnel complement of 26 DHS positions, and the acceptance of the 2020 CSBG Discretionary funds of \$600,000.00 from TDHCA for the period October 12, 2020 through September 30, 2021.

There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this ordinance authorizing the submission of the 2021 Community Action Plan, Budget and Personnel Complement and acceptance of 2021 CSBG funds, upon award, of up to \$2,051,128.00, and the acceptance of 2020 CSBG Discretionary funds, upon award, of up to \$600,000.00 from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.