



Staff Report

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**File #:** 23-0345

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**REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION**

**DATE:** 05/03/2023

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** Community Services Department

**SUBJECT:**

PUBLIC HEARING FOR CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF THE 2023-2024 ACTION PLAN FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT AND HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMS

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This staff report asks Council to approve the Action Plan for the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships Programs for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The Action Plan recommends funding two Capital Improvement Projects and six Public Service Activities through the Community Development Block Grant Program and two Programs through the HOME Investment Partnership Program.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the City Council:**

- a. Approve the 2023-2024 Action Plan, inclusive of the allocation of funds to the Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships projects and authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to submit these documents and any necessary amendments to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- b. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to adjust the Action Plan project and activity funding levels proportionally, if necessary, should there be any modification to the final formula grant allocations by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- c. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to prepare and process all necessary budgetary transactions to receive the funds included in the Housing and Urban Development Funding Approval Agreements.

- d. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate, execute, and amend contracts with sub-recipients, developers, contractors, or professional service providers as necessary to implement the approved Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships program activities using funds under the approved 2023-2024 Action Plan, and any ongoing projects identified in prior Action Plans.
- e. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to execute, amend, and submit to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development all plans and documents necessary to administer the 2023-2024 Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships projects and activities.
- f. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to appropriate any Community Development Block Grant program income receipts from loan payoffs received by the City to the Residential Rehabilitation Program, CIP 67133431, a Community Development Block Grant approved project, within the Community Development Block Grant Fund.
- g. Authorize the City Manager or their designee to appropriate any HOME Investment Partnerships program income receipts from loan payoffs received by the City to the Residential Rehabilitation Program, CIP 67133432, a HOME Investment Partnerships approved project, within the HOME Investment Partnership Fund.

**BACKGROUND & HISTORY:**

The City Council approved the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Funds on June 17, 2020. The five-year Consolidated Plan includes a comprehensive assessment of housing, community and economic development needs in Corona and provides a five-year strategy to address identified needs. Each year the City Council adopts an Annual Action Plan that describes how CDBG and HOME Funds will be spent to address the strategies outlined in the Consolidated Plan.

The Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Action Plan is scheduled for a public hearing on May 3, 2023, after which the City Council may approve the Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships Programs funding recommendations. The City's Action Plan containing the approved activities is due to the Department of Housing and Urban Development on May 15, 2023

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations allow 20 percent of CDBG funds to be used for administration and 15 percent to be used for public services that would serve and benefit eligible City residents. The remaining balance of CDBG funds may be used on City Capital Improvement projects. Activities funded by CDBG and HOME funds are to specifically serve persons of low and moderate incomes.

**ANALYSIS:**

The City's CDBG allocation is \$1,181,327 for FY24. The City may use 20 percent of the funds (\$236,265) for administration to perform, monitor, and provide annual reporting to HUD on the City's CDBG program and may use up to 15 percent of the funds (\$177,195) for non-profit public service providers. For the upcoming fiscal year, the Community Services Department recommends allocating

\$177,195 to service providers selected as part of the 2021-2024 four-year grant application process. The Fiscal Year 2023-2024 public service grants will be the third year of the four-year commitment. The remaining balance of the CDBG allocation for FY 2023-2024 is \$767,867, plus \$53,916 of prior year unspent funds for a total of \$821,783.

The following information describes the projects and activities recommended for funding in the Action Plan, including CDBG Capital Improvement Projects, CDBG Public Service activities, and HOME projects and activities.

### **CDBG Capital Improvement Projects considered for Funding**

City departments implementing housing and community development activities were requested to submit funding applications for programs or projects that would benefit low- and moderate-income residents including those located within the CDBG target area. The Community Services Department received two grant applications from City departments for FY 2023-2024.

<b>Proposed CDBG Capital Grant Requests</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
Code Compliance	\$100,000
Community Facilities & Infrastructure - Sheridan/Victoria Parks Phase II	\$721,783
Total Amount Requested	\$821,783
Amount of Funding Available	\$821,783

#### Code Compliance Program

The Code Compliance Program managed by the Planning and Development Department provides one full-time City Code Compliance position to the CDBG target area that would otherwise be paid by the General Fund. This position inspects residential dwellings and properties to ensure safe and sanitary housing and preserves aging housing units occupied by low- and moderate-income persons. CDBG funds currently fund this program that provides a necessary service to the CDBG target area. The General Fund provides for Code Compliance outside of the CDBG target area.

#### Corona Park Improvements Sheridan and Victoria Parks (Multi-Year Park Plan)

Established in FY 23 as a 3-year CDBG park plan, this project places a priority funding request for program years 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25. The project will lower barriers and provide access to passive recreational activities and additional programming opportunities. In addition, it will provide amenities to residents in this underserved area that may not have means of accessing other parks within the city. It will provide fair and equitable access to all Corona residents and youth. Improvements for each program year are outlined below:

#### **Year 1 - In Progress - (CDBG Program Year 2022-2023):**

- **Sheridan Park:** The demolition of current aged play structure and the replacement of that unit with an inclusive unit which allows for ADA accessibility and provides play experiences for all.
- **Victoria Park:** The use of open space at the site location to include the installation of

splash pad with water features and sprayers.

Year 2 - Proposed - (CDBG Program Year 2023-2024):

- Sheridan Park: Demo of existing restroom structure and installation of single use prefabricated restroom building.
- Victoria Park: interior classroom rehabilitation to create a larger and more functional space.

Year 3 - Future Proposed - (CDBG Program Year 2024-2025):

- Sheridan Park: The removal of a single large picnic shelter and replace it with smaller pavilion shelters (up to 3 new units) with lighting at each shelter.
- Victoria Park: The addition of security lighting throughout the park along with upgrades to current lighting structures to LED.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends providing CDBG funds for Code Compliance and for Year 2 of the Multi-Year Park Plan. These projects address concerns raised by residents in the Consolidated Plan about conditions in parks, and the need for improvements to facilities within parks.

**CDBG Public Service Grant Activities considered for Funding**

The Community Services Department recommends providing funds to all six of the selected CDBG public service grant nonprofit organizations selected last year as part of our four-year public service grant Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) that serves the City through the remaining years of the adopted 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan.

<b>Proposed CDBG Public Service Grants</b>	<b>Amount Recommended</b>
ABC Hopes, Inc.: (dis)ABILITIES Fitness + Life Skill Support	\$28,839
Big Brothers Big Sisters: Bigs with Badges Mentoring Program	\$28,839
Fair Housing Council of Riverside County: Fair Housing	\$33,000
Starting Over, Inc.: Path to SEED	\$28,839
Peppermint Ridge: Nursing Services	\$28,839
Voices for Children: Court-Appointed Special Advocate Program	\$28,839
Total Amount Recommended	\$177,195
Amount of Funding Available	\$177,195

The NOFA was issued on February 10, 2021, and distributed to 200 non-profit public service providers listed on the City's contact list. The NOFA was also advertised in the Sentinel Weekly and posted on the City's social media platforms. The deadline for grant applications was March 5, 2021. The City received a total of 11 grant applications from public service providers. The six activities listed in the table above represent the highest scoring applications from our four-year NOFA process.

**ABC Hopes, Inc.: (dis)ABILITIES Fitness + Life Skill Support**

This activity benefits low-income Corona residents with intellectual disabilities and their families through a fitness program and a life skills wrap-around support program. The program focuses on the participant's physical well-being through partnerships with local gyms and wellness centers, and life skills from selling produce the participants have harvested at the Corona Farmer's Market. Through these activities, participants gain opportunities for social interaction, money management skills, and other valuable life skills. This program assists approximately 120 Corona residents each Fiscal Year.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters: Bigs with Badges Mentoring Program**

This activity provides high school students with mentors in law enforcement from the Corona Police Department to focus on career exploration and life skills development. This mentorship program seeks to transform police and community relations while providing life-changing opportunities for youth dealing with incarcerated parents, poverty, and gangs. This program assists approximately 15 Corona residents each Fiscal Year.

**Fair Housing Council of Riverside County: Fair Housing**

The Fair Housing Council of Riverside County is the City of Corona's current provider of fair housing services. Fair housing assistance is a mandatory requirement of the Corona CDBG and HOME funds to affirmatively further fair housing choice as required by HUD. The program includes landlord-tenant mediation services, anti-discrimination services, workshops, seminars, presentations, and enforcement actions in partnership with HUD, the Department of Fair Employment and Housing, or private attorneys. The Fair Housing Council serves over 1,500 Corona residents each Fiscal Year.

**Starting Over, Inc.: Path to SEED**

Starting Over assists formerly incarcerated and convicted people to find employment, which is an essential first step to reentering society, maintaining housing, and remaining out of jail or prison. Studies show that work reduces reoffending, and the sooner ex-offenders are employed the less likely they will commit future crimes. Path to SEED helps participants address typical barriers like background checks, employer policies and practices, discrimination, and lack of employment skills. Starting Over provides pre-employment readiness training and other resources through agreements maintained with employers, employment agencies, local businesses, consultants, and other community stakeholders. This program assists approximately 120 Corona residents each fiscal Year.

**Peppermint Ridge: Nursing Services**

Peppermint Ridge uses CDBG public service funds to address a gap in client care for 24 men and women living in the Ridge's three "satellite" licensed Community Care homes separate from the main Peppermint Ridge campus located on Magnolia Avenue in Corona. The program provides nursing care from a registered nurse 32 hours per month to provide assessments, complete wellness checks, and review medical discharge orders from the hospital or emergency room. Additionally, the nurse serves as an advocate for the developmentally disabled residents when interacting with medical professionals. This program serves approximately 24 Corona residents each Fiscal Year.

**Voices for Children: Court-Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA)**

This program involves volunteers who advocate for children in foster care (ages birth to 21) in court,

at school, and throughout the community to ensure their needs are best represented in an overburdened foster care system. CASA commits to serving an individual child or sibling group for a minimum of 18 months and will spend 10-15 hours per month getting to know case child(ren), identifying necessary services and resources, and advocating on their behalf in court, at school and in the community. This program serves approximately 13 Corona residents each Fiscal Year.

Staff Recommendation

Staff is recommending that Corona City Council consider funding all six of the selected CDBG public service grant nonprofit organizations selected as part of our four-year public service grant NOFA that serves the City through the remaining years of the adopted 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. Funding recommendations include funding five public service providers at \$28,839 and the Fair Housing Services program at \$33,000.

**City HOME Projects considered for Funding Recommendation**

The City will receive \$526,976 of HOME funds and may use 10% (\$52,697.60) for city administrative costs. HUD requires a set-aside of 15% of the grant for projects undertaken by HOME Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO). The main activity recommended for funding using 75% of the HOME allocation is Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA). TBRA was also funded in the 2022 Action Plan and that funding will be used in furtherance of the Homeless Strategies to house homeless or at-risk households.

<b>Proposed HOME Activities</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Tenant-Based Rental Assistance	\$395,232.00
CHDO Reserve (HUD requirement)	\$79,046.40
HOME Program Planning and Administration	\$52,697.60

Staff Recommendation

Staff is recommending that Corona City Council consider funding the HOME activities listed above.

Public Participation for the CDBG/HOME FY 2023-2024 Action Plan

This item is a public hearing on the CDBG and HOME funding recommendations for the FY2023-2024 Action Plan. The Action Plan was made available for public review for a period of 30 days prior to the public hearing. The public review draft of the FY2023-2024 Action Plan is included as Exhibit 1 and available on the City's website at [www.coronaca.gov/government/departments-divisions/cdbg](http://www.coronaca.gov/government/departments-divisions/cdbg).

The Action Plan is required to be approved and submitted to HUD by May 15, 2023.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There will be no negative impact to the General Fund as a result of the planned projects to be funded with annual grants of CDBG and HOME funds from HUD.

**2023-2024 CDBG Activities**

1. Peppermint Ridge \$28,839

2. Voices for Children \$28,839
3. Starting Over \$28,839
4. Big Brother Big Sister \$28,839
5. ABC HOPES \$28,839
6. Fair Housing Council of Riverside County \$33,000
7. Code Compliance \$100,000
8. Community Facilities & Infrastructure - Sheridan/Victoria Parks \$721,783
9. CDBG Administration \$236,265

**2023-2024 HOME Activities**

1. Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) \$395,232
2. CHDO Reserve (HUD requirement) \$79,046
3. HOME Program Planning and Administration \$52,976

**ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

The creation of required plans and the allocation of CDBG and HOME funds is an administrative activity exempt under 24 CFR Part 58, Section 58.34 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. Additionally, these activities are not considered to be a "project" under the California Environmental Quality Act.

**PREPARED BY:** FRANK PEREZ, CDBG PROGRAM CONSULTANT & CYNTHIA LARA, COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE MANAGER

**REVIEWED BY:** ANNE K. TURNER, COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

**Attachments:**

1. Exhibit 1 - Draft 2023-2024 Action Plan for CDBG and HOME Investment Partnership Programs