



Legislation Text

File #: 21-036, **Version:** 1

Resolution to approve the draft 2021 Annual Action Plan for HUD submittal

Presenter:

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Summary:

Approval of the Annual Action Plan draft to HUD identifying strategies and performance expectations, as well as planned activities for the 2021 program year (Apr 1, 2021 through Mar 31, 2022)

Background:

The City of Colorado Springs is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) entitlement grantee and receives allocations of federal block grant funds under the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). The purpose of the funds is to benefit low- and moderate- income residents of Colorado Springs, prevent slum and blight, encourage the development, improvement, and preservation of affordable housing, prevent and reduce homelessness and meet other urgent community needs. To be eligible to receive the annual entitlement grants, the City must develop and submit to HUD an Action Plan every year, identifying activities for the coming program year.

In 2020, the City of Colorado Springs also received substantial allocations of grant funds from the CARES Act. The total amount = \$9,860,652 from two different programs, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). Per guidance from HUD, these funds will be programmed separately as a substantial amendment to the 2020 Annual Action Plan and are not included in today's item.

This item supports the City's strategic goal relating to building community and collaborative relationships by addressing a shortage of affordable housing, funding efforts to reduce and prevent homelessness, and improving the built environment in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods.

Furthermore, this item is supported by and implements PlanCOS Vibrant Neighborhoods Policy VN-2 -A pertaining to attainable housing and providing a variety of housing types for various life stages and income levels.

Previous Council Action:

N/A

Financial Implications:

The 2021 Annual Action Plan lays out the Division's expected financial resources. The Division

drafted the 2021 Action Plan based on a 10% funding increase in annual entitlement grants. Per capita entitlements from HUD have decreased over the past two decades, but we have received nominal increases in recent years. The estimated amounts are consistent with the City's adopted 2021 budget.

Because the Congressional budget was passed several months late, HUD gives its grantees permission to proceed with the public process and local approval based on estimates. Once HUD announces the final allocation amounts in the coming weeks, it is possible we will need to request a supplemental appropriation from City Council if the allocations exceed the amount approved in the City's 2021 budget. No additional general fund appropriation will be required.

CDD staff will apply any changes in the actual allocations to the three programs on a pro rata basis prior to submitting the final plan to HUD. The final plan will be available on our website upon submittal.

This year, CDD anticipates the following resources:

CDBG: \$3,487,527
\$3,387,527 from HUD
\$100,000 in program income

HOME:
\$1,685,785
\$1,885,785 from HUD
\$200,000 in program income

ESG: \$280,060 (all from HUD)

TOTAL: \$5,653,372

The projects and activities described in the 2021 Action Plan are consistent with the highest priority needs established in the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan with a particular emphasis on projects and activities that address affordable housing and housing stability in the community.

City Council Appointed Board/Commission/Committee Recommendation:

N/A

Stakeholder Process:

Substantive public engagement is essential to effectively meet the needs of our residents and understand what people are experiencing and what our residents care about. To this end, the Division follows the City's Citizen Participation Plan (CPP), which provides for and encourages public participation and consultation. It emphasizes involvement by residents and the organizations and agencies that serve low/moderate income (LMI) persons in the planning and implementation of community development and housing programs. In response to the need for social distancing, isolating/quarantines, and other emergency public health measures, we amended our CPP in 2020 to make necessary updates regarding noticing and digital meeting venues.

In order to create this plan, we held one public hearing via digital platform (Microsoft Teams), which

was noticed through the Gazette and through several digital outlets including social media, City website, and direct email. In order to seek comment on the plan draft, we noticed the comment period and upcoming public hearings using the same methods above. All site contents on the City's website are available in 104 languages. Email notices were sent in English and Spanish. Our Microsoft Teams Live event in December featured live closed captioning in English for the deaf and hard of hearing, and in Spanish, German, and Korean. The January public hearings will feature Chinese and Vietnamese in addition to the languages above.

To frame the discussion prior to creating the plan, we publicized a poll to Colorado Springs residents asking them what they would do with \$5 million to help their community, along with a series of questions much like the Census Household Pulse survey. We received over 1,200 responses. The summary is in the AP-15 of the plan and the survey data can be found in the appendix.

We also consulted with our local peer agencies and organizations by holding a number of small digital meetings to discuss effects of the pandemic on operations, client and organizational needs, outreach efforts, and planned projects. We seek mutually supportive ties with partner organizations when goals and target audiences intersect or complement one another.

Alternatives:

Council can choose to not approve the Action Plan draft and decline the estimated \$5.3 million allocation.

Proposed Motion:

Approve the resolution approving the draft 2021 Annual Action Plan for the use of federal block grant funds (CDBG, HOME, ESG) provided through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

N/A