



City of Bellevue

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 19, 2020

TO: Human Services Commission Members

FROM: Alex O'Reilly, Human Services Manager, 425-452-2824
Human Services Division
Parks & Community Services Department

Agenda Item for August 27, 2020 Commission Meeting

Discussion: Endorsement of CARES ACT Funding Recommendations for Emergency Financial Assistance

Background

As noted in the Commission agenda for August 17, 2020, on March 27, 2020, the federal government passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act"). The CARES Act established the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) which allocated a total of \$150 billion to state and local governments. The Washington State Department of Commerce administers CRF dollars to local governments in the state. Under the CARES Act, these funds may be used to cover costs that 1) are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19, and 2) are not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020. Under the requirements set by the Department of Commerce, funds may only be used for costs incurred during the period of March 1, 2020 through October 31, 2020. All final requests for reimbursement must be received by the Department of Commerce no later than November 15, 2020. The State of Washington was allocated approximately \$2.9 billion in CARES Act funds, \$785 million of which was assigned to eligible units of local government with populations greater than 500,000.

On April 27, 2020, Governor Inslee set aside \$300 million for local jurisdictions within the State of Washington with populations under 500,000. Based on the funding formula developed by the Office of Financial Management, the City of Bellevue was allocated \$4,359,000 in CARES Act funds. At their August 3, 2020 meeting, the Bellevue City Council voted to approve \$500,000 for Human Services Needs with \$300,000 allocated to agencies that are addressing food scarcity in Bellevue and \$200,000 allocated to emergency financial assistance from the total grant award for COVID-19 response. The Council decision was based on data that Human Services staff collected from the community verifying that these two areas are in great demand by Bellevue residents.

The Commission approved the funding recommended by staff for four agencies to address food scarcity at their August 18, 2020 meeting. At the August 27, 2020 meeting, Commissioners will discuss recommendations from staff on the allocation of funds for emergency financial assistance.

Process

In order to allow agencies who have not already received Bellevue funding for emergency financial assistance with either CDBG Coronavirus funds or City General Funds, the Council specified that these CARES Act funds should be put out as a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to agencies that are not currently funded and with a particular emphasis on applications that demonstrate that they will serve diverse, underrepresented populations who may not feel comfortable going to larger agencies to request emergency financial assistance. The RFQ was sent out on August 5, 2020 with applications due on August 19, 2020. Human Services staff will prepare staff reviews on each application received and their recommendations for funding. These will be transmitted to the Commission by email no later than August 26 for their review.

At the next Commission meeting on August 27, staff will ask the Commission to vote to endorse their recommendations.

Next Steps

If endorsed, staff will contact these agencies and begin the contracting process which will include a scope of work and a schedule by which the agency will be required to submit a monthly report including number of clients served, outputs (i.e. number and type of emergency financial assistance provided), and the amount of the grant that has been spent. Similar to the funds allocated for food scarcity, these funds must be spent by the agency by December 31, 2020.