



County of Fresno

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Legislation Text

File #: 20-0302, **Version:** 1

DATE: April 28, 2020

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Steven E. White, Director
Department of Public Works and Planning

Delfino E. Neira, Director
Department of Social Services

SUBJECT: 2020-24 Consolidated Plan and 2020-21 Annual Action Plan for Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnerships Grant, and Emergency Solutions Grant Programs and Citizen Participation Plan Amendment

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Approve amendment to the Fresno County Housing and Community Development Citizen Participation Plan, including the addition of policies on citizen participation requirements during declared emergencies;**
- 2. Conduct public hearing to receive testimony on proposed County community development, housing, and homeless grant programs;**
- 3. Approve 2020-24 Consolidated Plan, including use of Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnerships Grant, and Emergency Solutions Grant funds;**
- 4. Authorize Director of the Department of Public Works and Planning to execute Standard Form 424, Certifications, and Entitlement Grant Agreements for Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships Grant; and**
- 5. Authorize Director of the Department of Social Services to execute Standard Form 424, Certification, and Entitlement Agreement for Emergency Solutions Grant.**

The recommended actions are necessary for the County's participation in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Grant (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) entitlement programs, and permit Department of Public Works and Planning and the Department of Social Services staff to submit the required planning document and applications for entitlement funds to HUD. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Your Board may approve the Citizen Participation Plan and Consolidated Plan as proposed, or make any changes as appropriate, consistent with the Federal regulations governing each of these grant programs. The Consolidated Plan is due to HUD by May 15, 2020.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The Consolidated Plan contains the County's Annual Action Plan for Program Year (PY) 2020-21 and serves as the application for Fresno County's annual allocation of CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds. The anticipated grant funds include:

CDBG	\$2,779,414
HOME	\$1,108,704
ESG	\$ 245,607

The County's urban county area for the PY 2020-21 will consist of the eligible unincorporated areas and six participating cities (Fowler, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Reedley, and Selma). Participating cities receive allocations of CDBG funds based on the same HUD formula by which the urban county program receives its funding.

Below is the program funding for the unincorporated area portion of the CDBG funds, which is allocated each year by the Board to the County's ongoing programs. The total allocation for the six participating cities (incorporated area portion) is also listed in the table below.

Program	Grant Funding 2020-21
Sheriff's Area Based Policing	\$309,445
Community-Based Social Service Programs	\$107,467
Housing/Commercial Rehabilitation (HARP/FACE)	\$128,672
Unincorporated Area Public Facility/Infrastructure Improvement Projects	\$250,000
Participating Cities Public Facility/Infrastructure Improvements Projects	\$873,569
TOTAL	\$1,669,153

The two public service programs (Sheriff's Area Based Policing and Community-Based Social Service Programs) are funded at the maximum amount allowable by HUD. The combined total amount of the public service programs cannot be increased, though funding could be decreased or adjusted between the two programs. The remaining unincorporated area programs (Housing/Commercial Rehabilitation and Public Facility/Infrastructure Improvement Projects) may be funded at any amount of the total unincorporated area portion of the CDBG funds. A brief description of these programs is included as Attachment A.

The CDBG and HOME programs each have an allowance that pays for the administrative costs associated with these grant programs. Additionally, up to 7.5% of the ESG funds may be used for administration. The Action Plan includes a breakdown of how the programmatic portion of these grants will be utilized.

DISCUSSION:

The Consolidated Plan for Program Year 2020-24 is a five-year planning document required by HUD that describes the housing, community development and homeless needs for the cities and communities in Fresno County's Urban County Entitlement Program, and how those needs will be addressed utilizing the County's anticipated HUD grants. The document contains the five-year Strategic Plan and one-year Action Plan for addressing the needs. The Action Plan is submitted annually and serves as the County's application for its allocation of entitlement funds.

HUD requires the County to adopt a Citizen Participation Plan that details the procedures for involving the public during the preparation of the Consolidated Plan and annual Action Plans. Due to the COVID-19

pandemic, changes to the normal citizen participation process have been required, including limited in-person access to meetings and County offices and the library being closed to the general public. The proposed amendment to the Citizen Participation Plan includes the addition of a section regarding changes to the citizen participation process which may be made during declared local, State and National emergencies. The proposed amendment also includes updates to the methods of citizen involvement to reflect the administrative process used to meet HUD citizen participation requirements, a change to reduce the number of days a public notice must be published, and a change to require public notices be published in a local newspaper of general circulation, rather than specifying the Fresno Bee. In the case of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the required publication of the public notice and the public comment period would be reduced to five days before a public hearing.

The five-year Strategic Plan includes a housing, homeless and community development needs assessment and market analysis for the unincorporated area and the six partner cities and offers a strategy for addressing priority needs within the five-year planning period using CDBG, HOME and ESG funds.

The 2020-21 Action Plan is the first annual plan prepared to implement and achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the five-year Consolidated Plan. The plans are required by Federal regulations for the County to receive CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds.

The Department of Public Works and Planning collaborates with the Department of Social Services to prepare the Consolidated Plan and each Annual Action Plan and administer the CDBG and HOME Programs as directed by the Board. Also as directed by the Board, the Department of Social Services recommends for Board approval, negotiates, and administers agreements with selected eligible community-based social service programs utilizing CDBG, and the ESG program funds.

Citizens were provided many opportunities to assist in the planning and development of the County's five-year Consolidated Plan for 2020-24. Citizen participation for the Consolidated Plan occurred through a series of sixteen community and neighborhood meetings held in partner cities and unincorporated area communities from May through November 2019. The most important community needs expressed by members of the public and other public officials consistently throughout these meetings continue to be public facility and infrastructure improvements.

Additionally, the following citizen groups provided input into the strategic planning process: the Consolidated Plan Committee (CPC) regarding the Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plan; the Housing and Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) regarding CDBG public facility and infrastructure improvement projects in the unincorporated areas; and the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care regarding the ESG funded services. The County also collaborated with other housing, community development and homeless program partners to prepare the Consolidated Plan, including the Housing Authority of Fresno County and the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care. The Consolidated Plan has also been available for general public review and comment since March 25, 2020, via the County's website, at www.fresnocountyca.gov/grants.

Participating cities in Fresno County's Urban County CDBG Program for the PY 2020-21 will include Fowler, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Reedley, and Selma. Participating cities in Fresno County's CDBG Program receive annual allocations from this grant based on the same HUD formula by which the urban county program receives its funding from HUD. Cities may also agree to exchange funds between each other on a year-to-year basis to expedite expenditures necessary to meet Federal expenditure requirements. The combined total of annual allocations for the participating cities for PY 2020-21 will be \$873,569. Attachment B contains the list of cities' proposed activities for PY 2020-21 as included in the recommended Action Plan.

The Housing and Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) has completed its review and ranking of five proposed public facility and infrastructure improvement projects for the unincorporated areas.

The recommended amount of CDBG funds for unincorporated area public facility and improvement projects, in accordance with established Board policy, enables the first project on the CAC's recommended list to be funded with the remaining projects placed on a back-up list in priority order, as shown in Attachment C. Projects are then funded from the back-up list in the proposed priority order as funds may become available during the course of the year.

Based on the County's 2020-21 program year CDBG allocation for community-based social services, the Department of Social Services recommends continued funding for the ongoing community-based social service programs approved by the Board on September 24, 2019, at proportionally reduced amounts. The recommended 2020-21 program year CDBG funding for the community-based social service agencies as included in the Annual Action Plan is included in Attachment D.

The HOME Grant funds are used for housing rehabilitation loans, homebuyer (down payment) assistance loans for first-time homebuyers, and affordable housing development loans, serving clients in the unincorporated areas and the six participating cities of Fowler, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Reedley, and Selma. These program areas are listed in Attachment E. HOME funds are expended between the programs as applications are received from eligible clients on a first-come first-served basis for projects in the unincorporated areas and five participating cities, in order to comply with Federal expenditure requirements. The County is mandated to use at least 15% of the HOME grant funds for affordable housing projects carried out by designated Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs). The Board approves the specific project agreements for all affordable housing development loans.

ESG funds may be used for the following five program components: street outreach/emergency shelter, homelessness prevention, rapid re-housing, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and administrative activities (up to 7.5% of the allocation). ESG funds will be used to provide rapid rehousing through housing search and placement and financial assistance, as well as providing emergency shelter.

The Annual Action Plan includes certifications that assure HUD that the County has complied with various guidelines, regulations, and citizen participation requirements. These include conducting two public hearings, affirmatively furthering fair housing, maintaining a drug-free workplace, limiting lobbying, and ensuring that the activities of the Action Plan will principally benefit persons of low and moderate-income. The County has complied with all these requirements.

OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES:

The Consolidated Plan Committee (CPC) conducted a public hearing on the Consolidated Plan during its meeting on April 22, 2020. This public hearing was in lieu of the public hearing your Board typically conducts to set the funding levels for the unincorporated area programs. The CPC's public hearing was necessary in order to meet the Federal requirement for two public hearings, as HUD did not provide grant allocation amounts in time for your Board to conduct two hearings prior to the submission deadline.

The CPC includes Housing and Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee members representing Fresno County unincorporated area communities and neighborhoods (appointed by your Board), and representatives from the six participating cities in the County's CDBG program.

The Annual Action Plan has also been available for public review and comment to the general public on the County's website at www.fresncountyca.gov/grants.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #48, September 24, 2019

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Attachments A - E

On file with Clerk - 2020-24 Consolidated Plan

On file with Clerk - Citizen Participation Plan

CAO ANALYST:

Debbie Paolinelli