



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 20-381, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 7/15/2020

TITLE:

Virginia Community Development Block Grant

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Public hearing for proposed submission of applications for CDBG Grants Funding

ITEM TYPE: Regular Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Kamptner, Filardo, Pethia

PRESENTER (S): Stacy Pethia

LEGAL REVIEW: Yes

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: The Virginia Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a Federally funded grant program administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Since 1982, the DHCD has provided funding to eligible units of local government (in non-entitlement communities only) for projects that address critical community needs, including housing, infrastructure, and economic development. The CDBG application process requires two local public hearings be conducted. At the first public hearing with the Board on May 20, 2020, information was provided on eligible activities that may be funded by the CDBG program, the amount of funding estimated to be available, past activities undertaken with CDBG funds, and the process for applying for funding. No public comments were received during this hearing. The purpose of this public hearing is to provide information on the proposed project applications and to accept public comment on these applications.

STRATEGIC PLAN: *Quality Government Operations:* Ensure County government's capacity to provide high quality service that achieves community priorities.

DISCUSSION: Following the first CDBG public hearing held on May 20th, staff solicited proposals for potential CDBG projects in Albemarle County. Proposals were accepted for CDBG Planning Grants, Competitive Grants, or Urgent Need Open Submission Grants utilizing state CARES Act CDBG funding. The application form noted that priority will be given to projects or programs addressing a COVID-19 related community need. Proposals were due by 5:00 p.m. on June 12, 2020 via an online application form. The deadline was extended once to June 24th to accommodate a few last-minute inquiries.

This public hearing is only for the state CARES Act funding requests. A total of four applications proposing five programs have been received with a total combined funding request of \$1,516,183. Programs to address COVID-19 related issues include rental assistance for Southwood residents and residents of Piedmont Housing Alliance's properties located in Albemarle County, mortgage assistance, emergency family support and navigation services for low-income households; and emergency hotel shelter costs for homeless persons at high-risk for complications due to the coronavirus. A table summarizing each request is found in Attachment

C. Attachment D provides copies of each application.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, DHCD has implemented an expedited application process for COVID-19 related CDBG funding requests. This process is initiated by submitting a Letter of Interest to DHCD outlining the activities Albemarle County proposes to undertake along with the amount of funding needed to implement those activities. DHCD will then forward an application packet to the County for completion. DHCD is reviewing COVID-19 applications on a bi-weekly basis and disbursing funds shortly after approval. Albemarle County is able to apply for up to approximately \$1,000,000 in state funding for COVID-19 related CDBG projects, which must be expended by December 31, 2020.

Due to the funding restrictions staff is unable to recommend full funding for each request. However, to ensure funding is provided to meet a variety of critical community needs, staff worked with the nonprofit organizations requesting funding to rework the proposed project budgets. As a result, staff is recommending the County submit a Letter of Interest to DHCD for a total of \$1,179,994 -- \$1,129,994 for program funding with an approximate \$50,000 administrative fee. A breakdown of recommended funding amounts can be found in Attachment C. Staff has prepared a Letter of Interest (Attachment B) for this amount to be submitted to DHCD if approved by the Board.

Staff also received several non-COVID CDBG funding requests. Staff will work with each nonprofit to further develop program details for these programs and return to the Board at a later date for application approval.

BUDGET IMPACT:

There is no budgetary impact unless and until an application is made and a grant is awarded, at which time the Board will be asked to appropriate the funding. Community Development staff will work in partnership with OMB and Finance to administer the grant. CDBG projects include various levels of funding to offset administrative costs by awarding such funds based on performance. The budget submitted with the application will include a performance-based budget for administration.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment A). This action approves the County's submission of a Letter of Interest for CDBG-COVID funding at the recommended amount and authorizes the County Executive to execute the application package, as well as any supporting or related contracts or documents required to obtain or accept this grant, and to take any further action required for this application.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A: Resolution
- Attachment B: Letter of Interest
- Attachment C: Summary of CDBG Proposals
- Attachment D: Full CDBG Proposal Applications