

**CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda date: February 4, 2008

Reviewed by:_____

SUBJECT: 2008-2009 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) City-County Agreement

FROM: Ann Chaney, Community Development Director

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council approve the recommended use of FY 2008-09 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in the amount of \$91,902 (\$85,302 jurisdictional improvements + \$6,600 general administration) for the following projects:

- Meals on Wheels program - \$15,000
- Access Curb Ramps - \$70,429
- Alameda Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care Council - \$1,473
- 2-1-1 Program - \$5,000

DISCUSSION

The Alameda County Housing and Community Development Department is the lead agency in administering federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The City of Albany is eligible to use these funds within census tracts that meet specified income levels and for specific projects that will benefit low and moderate-income households.

In the past, examples of CDBG funded projects in Albany include:

- continuing assistance to the Meals on Wheels program for seniors
- Ocean View Park restrooms
- accessible curb ramps – citywide
- Teen Center upgrade

Albany's total 2008-09 CDBG allocation will be \$120,336, designated as follows:

- \$85,302 (71%) is assigned to "Jurisdictional Improvements" (i.e., eligible locally-designated projects);
- \$6,600 (5%) is designated for general administration
- \$28,434 (24%) is assigned to a Housing Rehabilitation program, managed by Alameda County

According to County officials, the amount of CDBG funding allocated through this federal program to Alameda County, is \$71,000 less than last year. Funding has

progressively been decreasing. For Albany's jurisdictional improvements, funding was \$89,154 in 2006-07, \$87,717 in 2007-08, and \$85,302 in 2008-09.

For the past several years, Albany used its general administration funds toward the City's share of Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care Council funding and the Dial 2-1-1 social services program. It is recommended that these administrative funds, totaling about \$6,000, again be used for such programs.

By doing this, a total of \$91,902 would be available for projects and programs directly or indirectly benefiting Albany's eligible residents.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

A requirement for using CDBG funds, with very few exceptions, is that at least 51% of the recipients must have an income that meets the definition of very low or low (50% to 80% of the countywide median income). In Albany, as the median income for the community continues to rise, meeting this requirement has become increasingly difficult. Programs that benefit disabled persons or the elderly usually have no difficulty meeting these income limits. Also, programs that abate blight or help to prevent blight can qualify for CDBG funds.

Staff is recommending that the funding available for FY 2008-09 be allocated to four programs:

1. **Meals on Wheels - \$15,000**
Ongoing program that helps pay staff costs for Meals on Wheels program coordination; program provides hot meals to eligible homebound seniors.
2. **Access Curb Ramps - \$70,429**
In 2004, the City constructed 43 access ramps with CDBG monies. In 2007-08, the Council authorized \$65,527 for curb ramp construction, but because of other pressing capital projects, this allocation has not yet been used. By combining the 2007-08 and 2008-09 allocation, the total amount of funds for curb ramp construction would total \$135,956, which results in about 39 ramps (assumes \$3,500 per ramp). This larger funding amount means a more competitive bidding process and possibly increased economies of scale (i.e., lower cost per ramp).
3. **Alameda County Homeless Continuum of Care Council - \$1,473**
Program provides services and collects information on Alameda County's homeless in order to better serve this population.
4. **2-1-1 Program - \$5,000**
Program provides a free, accessible, three digit telephone number enabling anyone to access the vital community services that they need. Targets the most at-risk populations including older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers, non-English speakers.

Last year the City received a request from Orientation Center for the Blind clients and staff to install “pedestrian audible signals” at key traffic controlled intersections. City staff has not received a positive response from County staff that such devices are eligible, in that the regulations state that improvements must eliminate an “architectural barrier” (e.g., raised curb). For informational purposes, such devices cost about \$5,000 per intersection.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The proposed use of CDBG funds will result in a savings to the General Fund of \$15,000 by off-setting the City’s cost of the Meals on Wheels program. Funding for needed access ramps helps supplement the City’s limited capital improvement funds, and funds for the Continuum of Care program and 2-1-1 program further Albany’s goals to assist homeless and at-risk populations.