

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

Agenda Date: 2/22/04
Prepared Date: 2/10/04
Reviewed by:_____

SUBJECT: 2005-2006 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) City-County Agreement

FROM: Dave Dowswell, Planning Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council approve the recommended use of FY 2005/06 Community Development Block Grant Funds in the amount of \$100,275 for the following projects:

- a. \$13,860 Meals on Wheels program,
- b. \$10,000 graffiti abatement program,
- c. \$20,000 crosswalk safety upgrade Eastshore Highway,
- d. \$20,000 unreinforced masonry ordinance implementation,
- e. \$36,415 to Ocean View Park restrooms.

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.

Last year the City received \$106,740 in CDBG funds. These funds were used to install curb ramps, widen the sidewalk in various areas on Solano Avenue to provide required disabled persons access, and assist with the funding for the Meals on Wheels program.

For fiscal year 2005/06, the City is guaranteed to receive \$100,275 in CDBG funds for eligible projects, which is down slightly from last year's amount of \$106,740.

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 trouble meeting

these income limits. Also, programs that abate blight or help to prevent blight can qualify for CDBG funds.

Staff is proposing for FY 2005-06 that \$13,860 of the City's CDBG allocation again be used to help pay for the Meals on Wheels program. It should be noted that the balance of the funding for this program (\$16,740) comes from the clients. Last year the City allocated \$32,940 of CDBG funds toward the cost of installing restrooms in Ocean View Park (estimated to be \$175,000 to \$200,000). This year staff recommends that the City allocate \$36,415 to the restroom project, bringing the total allocation to \$69,355. Future CDBG funds may need to be applied toward this project before it can be completed.

Staff also recommends three new projects be funded which include the following:

Crosswalk upgrade on Eastshore Highway - There is an existing crosswalk on Eastshore Highway in front of the remodeled (vacant) office building at 1025 Eastshore Highway. The crosswalk is part of the pedestrian trail/bike path that leads from the Buchanan Street overpass to the businesses along Eastshore Highway, which includes the new Target Store. Staff has estimated a project cost of \$20,000 to make the crosswalk improvements.

Unreinforced Masonry Building Ordinance implementation - In January the new Unreinforced Masonry Ordinance became law. This Ordinance requires property owners of unreinforced masonry buildings to upgrade their building to meet minimum seismic laws. Staff is proposing that \$20,000 be spent establishing a program for assisting property owners in seismically retrofitting their building. Staff will be returning to the City Council with the details of the program.

Graffiti Abatement of public property - Graffiti on public property has been an ongoing maintenance problem for the City. Timely removal of the graffiti by City crews has become difficult because it is not typically addressed until more urgent maintenance matters have been handled. Staff is proposing, on a trial basis, that the City hire a specialist in graffiti removal. Much of the money will be used to remove existing graffiti. The remainder of the funds will be used to remove new graffiti on an ongoing basis. Staff is proposing that \$10,000 of this year's CDBG funds be used to fund a program.

Staff will be returning to the Council in April for approval of a formal agreement in order to receive the CDBG funds.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The proposed use of CDBG funds will result in a savings to the General Fund of \$13,860 in fiscal year 2005-06.

Attachments

None

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