

2019-20 Low-Income Needs Assessment – Administrative Hearing
6:00 p.m., December 17, 2018 – Board Room

Meeting Notes

Call to Order:

Community Development Operations Manager Marjan Behzadi called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. 16 persons were present. After a brief welcome, Ms. Behzadi recognized Housing Coordinator Lynn Oshita for staff comments.

Staff Comments:

The City of Thousand Oaks annually receives an entitlement grant from the Federal government known as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). These funds are provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). CDBG funding must be used to primarily benefit lower-income persons or households.

- The July 1, 2019 CDBG grant is estimated to total approximately \$558,000. Sixty-five percent of this amount or \$362,700 would be available for community development projects. In addition, the City has \$31,445 available from prior years that could be allocated to 2019 activities. Therefore, for planning purposes, currently the City expects to have an approximate budget of \$394,145 in CDBG funds available for residential rehabilitation and other community improvements from July 2019 through June 2020.
- Now through Tuesday, January 15, 2019, the City is soliciting CDBG funding applications from non-profit agencies seeking an award of CDBG funds to address an unmet need of the lower-income population. The application can be found on the City's website www.toaks.org on the Community Development page.
- CDBG funds are limited and application process is competitive.
- Both Federal Davis-Bacon laws and State of California prevailing wage laws would apply to all projects that do not involve affordable housing units. The State considers funding to these activity types as a public work project and benefit to the public.
- After receiving CDBG funding applications for 2019-20, staff will evaluate the proposals and prepare a proposed spending plan that is expected to be available for 30 days of public review, as soon as HUD advises the City of the actual dollar amount of the City's 2019-20 CDBG entitlement grant. The City's CDBG funding year begins in July 2019 and ends in June 2020.

This past Fall, the City Council took the following actions:

- In October, the City Council declared a shelter crisis in the City under Resolution 2018-067 and has agreed to work collaboratively with the County of Ventura and the 9 other Ventura County cities. The City continues to support a regional coordinated approach in solving the countywide homelessness issue. The City has made this a high priority.
- Last month, the City Council consolidated the Community Grants Programs which included the Social Service Endowment Fund (SSEF) grants. The Social Service Ad Hoc Committee made its last recommendation to Council in June based upon a 2-year grant application for Fiscal Years 2018-19 and 2019-20.
- The new Community Funding Review Committee will conduct an annual review of SSEF grant applications starting with the July 2020 grants.
- CDBG public service grant applications will not be evaluated with this new Community Grants Committee but will be evaluated by City Staff annually.
- The current public service grants are in their 1st year of the 2-year grant application cycle. City Staff will be reviewing and evaluating all current public social grants as it prepares for the proposed 2019 (to) 2020 budget.

In compliance with the City’s “Citizen Participation Plan,” under City Council Resolution 2015-023, this administrative hearing is being held to receive public comment on the needs of the City’s lower-income persons. These needs may potentially be addressed by the City using CDBG funds or another funding resource.

Staff was available to respond to any of your questions about the City’s Low-Income Residents’ Needs Assessment process prior to the opening of the public hearing. Staff provided clarification on the social grant process for FY 2019-20.

Public Comments:

Community Development Operations Manager Marjan Behzadi invited those present to provide comments on the needs of low-income Thousand Oaks residents. Ten speakers were heard. Public comments received are summarized below.

Public Comments

1.	Espy Gonzalez, Program Manager Rain Transitional Living Center	RAIN assists individuals experiencing homelessness transition to permanent housing and provides case management. With CDBG funding, the RAIN continues to assist individuals with the resources necessary to help with employment as well as providing nutritional meals. Without the assistance of CDBG it would be difficult to continue these programs.
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2.	Janet Young Senior Concerns	Organization is a recognized expert and resource to help seniors and family caregivers as they age. Programs include an Adult Day Care, Meals on Wheels and Senior Advocacy which help guide the aging community and their caregivers to age in place at home. Reported in depth on the increasing population and record growth of seniors 65 and up. Thanked the City for support and requested continued funding to help ensure these programs thrive.
3.	Lisa Safaeinili Westminster Free Clinic	Organization primarily serves low-income, working poor individuals and provides free medical, dental, vision and mental health services to low income individuals. Clinic offers training opportunities to the youth which has gained great academic success. Requested that the City consider the working poor families in the Community as it considers funding.
4.	Susan Murata Hospice of the Conejo	Community-based non-profit providing non-medical hospice services and grief support to low income individuals as well as uninsured or underinsured families. In response to an exponential growth in grief support, the organization requested the continued support from the City which is critical for its continued success to help the public.
5.	Merari DeLara, Social Services Manager Lutheran Social Services	Organization that offers a food pantry, housing referrals, dental and vision prescription assistance, eviction prevention and many more programs throughout the Conejo Valley. Works with the Ventura County Sherriff Department to assist the public with homeless outreach. Benefited from assistance from other non-profit agencies such as RAIN, Senior Concerns and Community Conscience.
6.	Robin Britt Community Conscience	Community Conscience houses 13 human service non-profits (3 of which were in attendance) at no cost. Without Community Conscience, these organizations would be forced to cut their services or would no longer be able to operate. As the facility reaches its 30 th year, the AC units are of major concern; their failure would ultimately affect the non-profits and their abilities to perform. Requested the City to assist with funding for maintenance of the old AC Units to allow the many agencies that are housed to continue to perform.



7.	Jim Wolf Senior Alliance for Empowerment (SAFE)	SAFE is an organization that provides a rehabilitation program for very low-income seniors which reside in mobile home parks, including many veterans. The group has used CDBG funds for new roofs and windows. Thanked the City for their support and mentions how vital it is to have the City's financial support to continue to assist these individuals.
8.	Jason Meek, Executive Director Turning Point Foundation/Safe Haven	Non-profit dedicated primarily to serve the homeless population suffering from mental illness. Safe Haven, is the only 24 hr. behavioral health shelter in the County. Thanked the City for their support and continued funding would help their 14 robust programs with ongoing operations, case management, outreach and treating individuals holistically. In 2017 their Thousand Oaks goal was exceeded by 50 percent.
9.	Megan Glynn, Chief Officer Southeast Ventura County YMCA	Last year, organization introduced a summer program at Conejo Elementary School, dedicated to children of lower income families which included targeted programs with credentialed teachers, crafts and field trips. At the end of the program, students gained 2 months in reading and 2 ½ months in math. YMCA would like to continue this program and expand program to other schools.
10.	Lee Sherman, Grants writer Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association	This organization is Ventura County's only non-profit provider of comprehensive home health, medical hospice and family support operating since 1947. The organization provides a continuum of care that starts in a hospital and shifts to home care. Organization does not turn anyone away despite of their diagnosis and inability to pay. Thanked the City for their support.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Community Development Operations Manager Marjan Behzadi closed the public hearing and adjourned the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

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