

Mayor and Council Communication

DATE: 08/25/20

M&C FILE NUMBER: M&C 20-0587

LOG NAME: 19NS CARES ACT NGO TARRANT COLLABORATION

SUBJECT

(ALL) Authorize Acceptance of Applications from the Tarrant County Care 4 Tarrant Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Assistance Program, Approve Eligibility Criteria for Award of Coronavirus Relief Funds in a total amount up to \$4,200,000.00 to NGOs for Delivery of Direct Assistance to Persons and Households with COVID-Related Needs; and Certify that such Assistance is Necessary to Respond to the Coronavirus Pandemic

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that City Council:

- 1) Authorize acceptance of nonprofit applications from the Tarrant County Care 4 Tarrant Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Assistance Program;
 - 2) Approve eligibility criteria for award of Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) to eligible non-profit organizations in a total amount up to \$4,200,000.00 for delivery of necessary direct assistance to persons and households with needs as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic; and
 - 3) Certify that direct assistance provided under the approved eligibility criteria for award are necessary to respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic
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DISCUSSION:

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law on March 27, 2020 to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Title V of the Act authorized a direct allocation from the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) from the U.S. Treasury Department to the City of Fort Worth in the amount of \$158,715,568.00. All funds must be used for necessary costs incurred to respond to the public health emergency. Funds must be expended in accordance with federal regulations related to recordkeeping, audits, and subrecipient management.

On April 29, 2020, through M&C 20-0263, the City Council increased total appropriations to \$50,000,000.00 from the CRF for disaster response expenses, including delivery of direct assistance programs such as the Fort Worth CARES emergency rental assistance program and the Preserve the Fort small business assistance program. Through the Preserve the Fort application process, the Economic Development Department received a number of requests from non-profit organizations. The Economic Development Department is proposing a Phase II of the "Preserve the Fort" small business program which will include assistance for operations-related nonprofit expenses, including for reimbursement of Personal Protective Equipment and related expenses.

Non-profit organizations also approached the City of Fort Worth and Tarrant County requesting funds to provide direct social services assistance to respond to the pandemic. Tarrant County received \$209,000,000.00 from the State of Texas through Title V of the CARES Act and has accepted applications to use a portion of these funds for a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) program for nonprofits. County officials consulted with the City Manager's Office regarding collaboration and cost-sharing of funding for direct social services delivered in Fort Worth. The County agreed to share nonprofit applications with the City when direct assistance to Fort Worth residents is proposed. A balance of unexpended funds of approximately \$4.2 million is expected to be available from the Fort Worth CARES Emergency Rental Assistance Program and will be used by the City to fund its portion of this nonprofit direct assistance program.

The City of Fort Worth is accepting applications from Tarrant County's NGO assistance program for approval or denial based upon eligibility criteria established by the City of Fort Worth in accordance with guidance provided by the federal government. The Neighborhood Services Department will administer a City CRF-funded direct social services program using the City's criteria.

The following is the minimum eligibility criteria for consideration of proposals providing direct assistance to City residents in response to COVID-19:

- Providing services to meet basic needs, in particular, those related to food, housing, or other necessities and/or
- Providing services or goods to meet unanticipated public-health-related costs such as Personal Protective Equipment or other protective health measures. [NOTE: Requests pertaining exclusively to this category will be referred to the Economic Development Department in order to avoid duplication of benefits and maximize the number of nonprofits assisted.]

The following is the criteria for rejection of proposals without consideration for award:

- Revenue replacement to make up for loss of income by the nonprofit
- Programs that do not provide direct assistance to individuals or households
- Application information submitted does not demonstrate adequate financial management or record-keeping capacity commensurate with the federal nature of CRF funding
- Apparent duplication of benefits in violation of the Stafford Act
- Inability to document services are provided to City residents

Staff will rank eligible proposals to ensure that funds are allocated in a manner consistent with the criteria above. Funding and cost-share recommendations will be forwarded to the City Manager's Office for approval. CRF funds must be expended prior to December 30, 2020. On April 29, 2020, the City Council adopted an ordinance amending Section 2-9 of the City Code to authorize the City Manager's Office to execute contracts and other legal instruments necessary to provide public assistance from CRF dollars without needing to come back to Council (Ordinance 24166- 04- 2020). Using this authority, staff anticipates contracts being executed as quickly as possible so that funds can be reimbursed or disbursed to eligible non-profits prior to November 30, 2020, with a preference for reimbursement.

By approval of this M&C, the City Council certifies that the provision of funding to nonprofit entities to provide direct assistance, such as food, housing, and youth services, to Fort Worth families who have been impacted by the public health crisis is necessary to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This program will be available in ALL COUNCIL DISTRICTS.

A Form 1295 is not required because: This M&C does not request approval of a contract with a business entity.

FISCAL INFORMATION / CERTIFICATION:

The Director of Finance certifies that upon approval of the above recommendations, funds will be available in the current operating budget, as appropriated, in the Grants Operating Federal Fund. The Neighborhood Services Department will be responsible for the collection and deposit of funds due to the City. Neighborhood Services has the responsibility to validate the availability of funds prior to expenditures being incurred. This is an advance grant.

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