

Mayor and Council Communication

DATE: 01/28/25

M&C FILE NUMBER: M&C 25-0083

LOG NAME: 19CDBG-DR POLICY ADOPTION FOR HARRP AND MITIGATION

SUBJECT

(ALL) Approve Policies and Procedures for the Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery Homeowners Assistance Repair and Rehabilitation Program and Program Guidelines for the Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery Mitigation Plan for the Neighborhood Services Department

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Approve the Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery Homeowners Assistance Repair and Rehabilitation Program Policy Manual to assist households with repairs from 2021 Winter Storm Uri; and
 2. Approve the Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery Mitigation Plan for the Energy Resilience and Winter Storm Road Readiness projects.
-

DISCUSSION:

Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds were originally awarded to the City of Fort Worth on May 24, 2022, in the amount of \$16,614,000.00 due to Winter Storm Uri, which impacted thousands of Texans across the state. A second award of \$10,858,000.00 on September 30, 2022 increased the total and current amount to \$27,472,000.00.

The first phase of implementation for these funds is proposed for the following:

- Direct assistance to Fort Worth homeowners impacted by Winter Storm Uri through the creation of the Homeowner Assistance Rehabilitation and Repair Program (HARRP) for single-family home repair assistance
- Indirect assistance through mitigation efforts including energy resilience for community centers that would be utilized to provide disaster assistance and winter storm road preparedness improvements.

This Mayor and Council Communication (M&C) seeks the City Council's approval of policy and procedure manuals and guidelines for both programs. Funding for both proposals is included in the public hearing and substantial amendment to the original CDBG-DR Action Plan, approved on February 14, 2023 (M&C 23-0072), and included for consideration on the January 28, 2025 agenda, M&C Log Name:19CDBG-DR ACTION PLAN SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT.

Housing Assistance Rehabilitation and Repair Program (HARRP)

The HARRP will assist residents with single-family home repair needs that are still unaddressed from the 2021 Winter Storm Uri and additional home rehabilitation improvements as eligible. The proposed amount for the HARRP is \$7,295,400.00 and although some residents may have received assistance elsewhere with limited work completed, CDBG-DR eligible residents may potentially receive up to \$150,000.00 of home repair and rehabilitation assistance under this program. Through an application process, residents will be screened to determine eligibility and duplication of benefits, if any. The national objective for direct assistance for the single-family rehabilitation and repair program is low-moderate housing (LMH) with the intent to alleviate the burden of Fort Worth residents impacted by Winter Storm Uri and all HARRP clients served will be 80% or below Average Median Income (AMI).

Eligible applicants must meet the following criteria:

- be a Fort Worth resident
- own the home needing repair
- be the primary resident of the home
- be current on property taxes
- be 80% or below AMI at the time of application

Eligible structures must meet the following criteria:

- be in the City of Fort Worth
- be an eligible structure: single-family, manufactured, mobile or stick-built home
- have sustained verifiable unrepaired storm damage

In addition to unmet Winter Storm Uri damage, HARRP highlights include:

For single-family stick-built and manufactured homes:

- needed repairs beyond storm damage up to the Housing Quality Standards (HQS)
- additional eligible site-specific needs (accessibility, deferred maintenance, environmental issues)
- eligible award amounts up to \$150,000.00

For mobile homes:

- needed repairs limited to leaky roofs, solid flooring, operable plumbing, hot water heaters, operable windows and electrical repairs related to stove and refrigerator hook-ups
- eligible award amounts up to \$15,000.00
- The HARRP recommendation no longer includes new construction/reconstruction of single-family homes

Outreach efforts to start HARRP will include residents who contacted the Waterline Assistance Through Emergency Repair (W.A.T.E.R) Program, built upon the City's existing Priority Repair Program (PRP), during the storm—estimated to be 150 contacts—with or without verified storm damage that may still have unmet needs, due to the fact that emergency repairs are often of a temporary nature; however, some applicants may have been denied due to a scope larger than what W.A.T.E.R. could remedy at the time, and Federal Emergency Management Agency Individual Assistance applicants with a verifiable loss who received no assistance.

Priority will be given to applicants in the following order:

- applicants that received no previous assistance from W.A.T.E.R.
- applicants who received limited previous assistance from W.A.T.E.R.
- applicants with 2 or more of the following criteria:
 - age 65+
 - disabled
 - veteran
 - female head of household
 - 1 or more household members under the age of 18
- applicants with 1 of the above criteria

CDBG-DR Mitigation Plan

Mitigation funds are awarded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) specifically for activities that aim to increase resilience to disasters and reduce the risk of injury, loss of life, property damage, and other hardships. The mitigation set aside is an amount set by HUD that equates to approximately 15% of the total grant award for unmet needs. A grantee is allowed to spend more than the HUD designated amount on mitigation, but not less.

The original requirement of \$2,167,000.00 was designated by HUD with the original award and then increased to \$3,583,000.00 with the second HUD CDBG-DR award. Staff also recommends an additional \$500,000.00 beyond the required mitigation for a total of \$4,083,000.00 spending to address two specific City of Fort Worth (COFW) facility improvement needs: the installation of generators at selected community centers which will enhance the City's disaster response and energy resiliency efforts should a disaster occur and improvements to production and storage of salt and brine for winter storm road readiness, particularly to clear key transportation routes around critical areas such as hospitals or fire departments.

The generators will be permanent structures, optimized for modern power production, capable of extended operation, and tailored to meet the specific energy needs of each facility. The three facilities proposed are Handley Meadowbrook, Riverside and Worth Heights Community Centers. The addition of the generators at these locations will increase energy resilience by allowing restrooms with showers, activity rooms, kitchens, phone and internet services, and gyms for dormitory purposes, to be maintained/or restored to power in order to activate the facilities in the event of a disaster to assist residents who are displaced from their own homes temporarily as a result. For the generator program, the national objective meets the low-moderate area (LMA) benefit that serves an entire area of low-moderate residents.

The COFW will implement the emergency resilience improvements through an interdepartmental partnership with Neighborhood Services Department (NSD) as the grant facilitator, Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) as post-improvement operations managers at the facilities and Property Management Department (PMD) as the project managers for the capital improvement implementation through a Letter of Agreement (LOA).

The winter storm road preparedness improvements were identified by Transportation and Public Works (TPW) Department to provide better winter street treatments during emergency operations. The construction of an enclosure for storage of salt, the ability to purchase brine making machine and storage equipment will help prevent the formation of ice on the roadways and reduce vehicular accidents (about 350 vehicular accidents occurred during Winter Storm Uri), reduce economic impact due to lost productivity during winter storm events, and improve quality of life by providing increased service to 11 hospital trauma centers. Because this project will benefit the entire City, the national objective for this project will be Urgent Need, which is able to serve up to 120% AMI. The COFW will implement the winter road readiness improvements through an interdepartmental partnership with NSD as the grant facilitator and TPW as the project managers for the capital purchase and improvement implementation through a LOA.

In order for the Mitigation Plan to be implemented, program guidelines must be in place to ensure compliance with applicable laws as required by local, state, and/or federal entities.

A copy of both the HARRP policies and procedures and the CDBG-DR Mitigation Plan program guidelines are provided.

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 approval of these recommendations will have no material effect on City funds.

Submitted for City Manager's Office by: Jessica McEachern 5804

Originating Business Unit Head: Kacey Bess 8187

Additional Information Contact: Pamela Rambo Sexton 7556

Expedited