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Barney S. Heath
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Newton Planning and Development Board

FR: Barney Heath, Director of Planning and Development
Amanda Berman, Director of Housing & Community Development
Tiffany Leung, Senior Community Development Planner
Shaylyn Davis, Community Development Planner

RE: CDBG Human Service Program and Request for Proposals (RFP) Process

Date: 10/30/2020

OVERVIEW

Annually, the City of Newton receives Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), of which 15% is allocated for the Human Service Program. These funds are made available through a Request for Proposals (RFP). In FY21, a total of \$304,698 was made available for the FY21 Human Service Program.

FY21-25 CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND PROGRAM DESIGN

In the development of the FY21-25 Consolidated Plan, the Planning Department's Housing & Community Development Division staff consulted with a number of stakeholders, including local social service providers, to understand the needs of low- and moderate-income people throughout Newton. Concurrently, staff met regularly with the City's Health and Human Services Department (HHS), in particular the HHS social workers, who are the first point of entry for many of the City's most vulnerable residents seeking support.

Some of the human service-related priority needs identified through this process included assistance with basic life skills, mental health services, access to affordable childcare, legal services, home care for the elderly, financial literacy, services to maintain a successful tenancy, job training, financial assistance for security deposits and first and last month's rent, and translation and interpretation services for non-English speaking individuals and families.

As a result of these consultations and continued assessment of the Human Service Program, Division staff shifted the focus of the program from economic mobility to stability, prioritizing services and/or interventions that support and enhance the lives of vulnerable Newton residents

across the lifespan. During the Mayor Warren administration, the Human Service Program was based on the Benchmarks for Success, modeled after a Brookings Institute study. The Benchmarks identified specific milestones for each age group in order to achieve independence and self-sufficiency.

In an effort to align the Benchmarks with the identified needs from the Consolidated Plan, Division staff, in partnership with the HHS, made subtle changes to the program design and released the FY21 RFP with the following priority areas:

1. Enrichment and Care for Vulnerable Youth, Ages 0-18
2. Stability and Self-Sufficiency for Vulnerable Adults, Ages 19-61
3. Promoting Economic Security and Vitality for Older Adults, Ages 62+

Proposals were evaluated by a review committee comprised of representatives from the Department of Planning and Development and the Department of Health and Human Services. Subsequently, the review committee consulted with two representatives of the Planning and Development Board. Proposals were ranked based on their alignment and consistency with the City's three priority areas, as well as the program's past performance, organizational staff capacity, and target population. The proposals' ability to address the most pressing needs in the community were also highly considered.

Division staff's close partnership with HHS has helped to ensure that the programs funded by the CDBG Human Service Program are consistent with what the City's social workers are seeing on the ground. HHS' close involvement in the program provides another critical lens through which Division staff can assess the agencies' work throughout the year and offer guidance for meeting the City's needs in a strategic way.

FY21 HUMAN SERVICE PROGRAM RECIPIENTS

The City received fifteen proposals, thirteen of which were awarded Human Service grants during the FY21 (FFY20) program year, following the recommendation of the Human Service RFP Review Committee. The selected programs will directly benefit low- to moderate-income Newton residents and will provide a critical network of supports to assist in stabilizing vulnerable individuals and families across the lifespan. CDBG dollars are critical to ensuring these important programs exist for the City's low- to moderate-income population. The following list of FY21 program allocations highlights the array of programs and services supported by CDBG:

FY21 CDBG Human Service Awards		
Agency	Program	FY21 Award
Riverside Community Care	Mental Health Services Promoting Self-Sufficiency	\$50,000.00
Family ACCESS	Social Mobility for Young Families	\$48,000.00
The Second Step	Community Programs for Adult Survivors of Domestic Violence	\$35,000.00
Newton Housing Authority	Resident Services Program	\$33,410.00
Newton Community Development Foundation	Resident Services Program	\$31,000.00
John M. Barry Boys & Girls Club of Newton	Financial Aid for Teens and Families	\$17,000.00
Jewish Family and Children's Services	Stabilization and Recovery Services	\$15,408.00
2Life Communities (formerly JCHE)	CaringChoices and Wellness Nursing for Low-Income Seniors	\$15,000.00
Barry L. Price Rehabilitation Center	Promoting Successful Life Transition for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	\$15,000.00
Plowshares Education Development Center	Tuition Assistance for Pre-School and School-Age Care	\$15,000.00
Horace Cousens Industrial Fund	Emergency Grants for Vulnerable Individuals and Families	\$12,000.00
REACH Beyond Domestic Violence	Individual Support and Advocacy for Adult Survivors of Domestic Violence	\$11,880.00
Society of St. Vincent de Paul*	Housing Emergency Assistance Program	\$6,000.00
TOTAL		\$304,698.00

**Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a new applicant this year.*

BENEFICIARIES FROM FY20 PROGRAM YEAR

The Human Service Program targets a majority of its CDBG funds to support the most vulnerable Newton residents. During the FY20 program year (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020), the Human Service Program served **2,759 individuals**, of which, **90% (2,477) had an annual income at or below 50% Area Median Income (AMI)**.

FY20 Program Beneficiaries by Income Limits

Income Limits	Number of Beneficiaries Served	% of Total Served
30% AMI	1,696	61.5%
50% AMI	781	28.3%
80% AMI	119	4.3%
Over 80% AMI	163	5.9%
Total	2,758	100%

Program Beneficiaries by Race/Ethnicity Groups

Race	Number of Beneficiaries Served	% of Total Served
White	2,176	78.9%
Black/African American	227	8.2%
Black/African American & White	5	0.2%
Asian	189	6.9%
Asian & White	30	1.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4	0.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native & White	5	0.2%
Other Multi-Racial	123	4.5%
Total	2,758	100%

Of the 2,758 individuals served, approximately 8% (206) identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino.

PROGRAM MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

Throughout the program year, Division staff maintains regular communication with the agencies to ensure their programs are operating as effectively as possible to serve the City's most vulnerable residents. Through quarterly program reports, annual monitoring of the programs, regular provider meetings, and check-ins with the agencies, Division staff stays abreast on the implementation of the programs and provide technical assistance as needed. In addition, the regular communication enables Division staff to facilitate the cross collaboration between the agencies to maximize the use of the limited CDBG funds.

A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE HUMAN SERVICE PROGRAM

As a recipient of CDBG funds, the City of Newton is required to take meaningful actions to overcome patterns of segregation and to foster an inclusive community free from discrimination. The City achieves this goal through the annual monitoring visits of its human service projects. During these monitoring visits, the City will request documentation of marketing and outreach efforts to ensure qualified households have equal opportunity to participate in the CDBG-funded programs and to obtain the services that they need. In addition, agencies are required to identify strategies to target groups of different race, national origin, age, or disability.

Finally, the City requires all agencies to have a Language Access Plan and Reasonable Accommodation Plan, or equivalent documents, to ensure households with Limited English Proficiency or persons with disabilities are able to access the same services as their counterparts.

Looking ahead to the FY22 Human Service RFP, as part of the application, applicants will be asked to provide information on their efforts to reduce the racial and ethnic disparities that might exist within their programs.

FY22 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Going into the FY22 RFP process, Division staff recommends keeping with the “stability across the lifespan” model that was developed for the FY21 program. This simplified structure helps to ensure that the program holistically addresses the needs across the lifespan in Newton, as all age groups require some level of support and enrichment. The RFP process elicited strong proposals and the two-step review process worked well to identify appropriate funding recommendations. Especially in light of the continued crisis surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, Division feels strongly that now more than ever, the City must do what it can to support Newton’s human service infrastructure as the City’s most vulnerable residents are faced with a new level of challenges and needs.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information regarding the Human Service Program, please contact Amanda Berman, aberman@newtonma.gov, Tiffany Leung, tleung@newtonma.gov, or Shaylyn Davis, sdavis@newtonma.gov.