



Item: CDBG & HOME Grant/Consolidated Plan Community Needs Public Hearing

From: Planning and Community Development Department

Initiated By: Jolene Wetterau, Planning and Community Development Department
CDBG/HOME Administrator

Presented By: Craig Raymond, Planning and Community Development Department
Director

Action Requested: Conduct Public Hearing

Public Hearing:

1. Mayor conducts public hearing, opens the floor for public comment.
2. Mayor closes public hearing.

Suggested Motion: No action required

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the City Commission conduct the Consolidated Plan Community Needs Public Hearing required for the City Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Grant programs and for the State HOME Grant program.

The City Commission set the public hearing on December 1, 2015. Notice of the Public Hearing before the City Commission was published in the *Great Falls Tribune* on December 10, December 12, December 14, and in the *Consumers Press* on December 10, 2014. Press releases were submitted to the media to inform the community about this public hearing. Notice about the Needs Public Hearing was made available to all Great Falls Housing Authority residents and given to the nine Neighborhood Councils, the local Continuum of Care for Homelessness, the Housing Task Force, and local non-profit agencies and government departments. Notice of the hearing has been posted on the City's website.

Summary: The City Commission is required to conduct a public hearing seeking input regarding the needs within the community that can be assisted through the annual award of Community Development Block Grant funds. The public hearing allows citizens within Great Falls an opportunity to inform the Commission and to provide input to the allocation process conducted by the City.

Background: CDBG and HOME programs are federal programs administered by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to help fund local community development programs including affordable housing, public service, economic development and public infrastructure projects. The primary goal of these programs is to assist low and moderate income (LMI) persons in their respective communities. State and local governments receive funding from HUD based on a formula derived from population and housing statistics.

Citizen Participation

The Citizen Participation Plan, adopted by the City Commission in January 2012 (which will be reaffirmed in January 2016) stipulates a public hearing be held to allow citizens, especially lower income citizens, the opportunity to address the Commission regarding the needs of the community, and to make recommendations to the City Commission on the use of CDBG and HOME Grant funds. A forum to obtain public input regarding the needs of the community is required by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development in order for the City to secure federal grant dollars.

Purpose

The purpose of this Action Plan Community Needs Public Hearing is to allow citizens, especially low and moderate income citizens of Great Falls, an opportunity to advise the City Commission of the community's housing and supportive services issues. The public is encouraged to share ideas on how federal grant funds can be used to address community revitalization.

This hearing is not meant to be a format for agencies to lobby for their respective Community Development Block Grant or HOME Grant funding applications. Instead, individuals are encouraged to speak on housing and non-housing community development issues in the city, and especially the effect of these issues on low and moderate income persons. CDBG funds can be used for a wide range of community development activities directed toward neighborhood revitalization, economic development, energy conservation and improved community facilities and services. HOME grant funds can be used for affordable home ownership programs including development of homes, loan financing, and affordable multi-family rental housing development.

Evaluation and Selection Process

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires public input, especially input from lower income citizens and the agencies representing them, as to the issues and needs of the community. The Commission will be asked to give consideration to citizen comments received during this public hearing when determining funding priorities for the Community Development Block Grant Program and the HOME Grant Program, and for submission of a HOME grant application to the Montana Department of Commerce.

Conclusion

The public hearing provides citizens an important opportunity to identify community development needs, particularly those impacting low to moderate income households in Great Falls.

Fiscal Impact: Conducting the public hearing will allow the City to receive CDBG funds. Last year the City received approximately \$716,000 in CDBG and \$195,000 in HOME funds. The Federal allocation for this fiscal year is undetermined at the time of this staff report.

Alternatives: The City Commission could decide to not conduct the public hearing and thereby choose to not receive CDBG and HOME funds for FY 2016. The hearing is required for the City to be awarded 2016/2017 CDBG and HOME funding.

Attachments/Exhibits: CDBG HOME Funding Schedule 2016-2017

2016 – 2017 CDBG/HOME Allocation and Annual Action Plan Schedule	
City Commission appoints Community Development Council (CDC) members	N/A
Application available on City web site	Tuesday December 1, 2015
CDBG/HOME Application Workshop	Tuesday December 8, 2015
City Commission conducts “Needs” Public Hearing	Tuesday December 15, 2015
Pre-deadline review of applications	Friday December 31, 2015
Commission Work Session to set CDBG funding Priorities & Policy	Tuesday January 5, 2016
Funding application deadline (Please note it is a 5 pm deadline)	Wednesday January 13, 2016
City Commission sets CDBG funding priorities	Tuesday January 19, 2016
Community Development Council (CDC) Orientation Meeting	Wednesday January 27, 2016
CDC reviews applications and develops funding recommendations for CDBG projects.	Monday February 1, 2016 to Friday February 26, 2016
CDC/Staff presents funding recommendations for CDBG applications to the City Commission	Tuesday March 15, 2016
City Commission accepts project application funding recommendations for inclusion in 2016/2017 Annual Action Plan, sets the public hearing date.	Tuesday March 15, 2016
Proposed 2016/2017 Annual Action Plan completed and available for review.	Wednesday March 23, 2016
30 day comment period for proposed 2016/2017 Annual Action Plan	Wednesday March 23, 2016 to Friday April 22, 2016
Public Hearing on Proposed Annual Action Plan	Tuesday April 19, 2016
Commission approves Annual Action Plan	Tuesday May 2, 2016
ConPlan/Annual Action Plan submitted to HUD	Monday May 9, 2016

NOTE: Schedule is tentative depending on Commission meeting dates and actual meeting dates.