

# Item 11



## Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

**Meeting Date:** 6/11/13

**Prepared By/Phone Number:** Christy Moffett, LMSW / 854-3460

**Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head:**

Sherri E. Fleming, County Executive of Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service

**Commissioners Court Sponsor:** Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

### **AGENDA LANGUAGE:**

Consider and take appropriate action on a request to approve the following items related the Community Development Block Grant available through HUD:

- A. The proposed projects for the Program Year 2013 Action Plan:
  - a. Lake Oak Estates Substandard Road Improvement Project Phase 3 for \$425,000;
  - b. Owner Occupied Home Rehabilitation Project for \$ 177,940;
  - c. Family Support Services Social Work Expansion Project for \$75,000;
  - d. Fair Housing Counseling Project for \$50,000; and
  - e. Administrative and Planning Project for \$181,985.
- B. The alternate projects for the Program Year 2013 Action Plan:
  - a. Owner Occupied Home Rehabilitation Project for up to \$1 Million; and
  - b. Las Lomitas Water, Wastewater and Design Project for up to \$480,000.

### **BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:**

An Action Plan describing how Travis County intends to spend its allocation is due to HUD by August 15, 2013. A minimum of 65% of the allocation must be spent on Housing and Community Development projects. Funds for Administration and Planning projects are capped at 20% and funds for Public Services capped at fifteen percent. Staff presented the recommended projects to the Court on May 28<sup>th</sup>, and the project must be approved on June 11<sup>th</sup> for inclusion into the draft Action Plan for public comment beginning June 24<sup>th</sup>.

When CDBG staff presented the projects to the Court for consideration on May 28, 2013, the PY13 grant amount used was a planning estimate of \$851,524. HUD released the final allocation amount on May 29, 2013. Travis County's PY13 allocation is \$909,925 – an increase over PY12's allocation of \$896,341. The Home Rehabilitation project and Administration and Planning project are therefore recommended for a higher funding level than was originally presented to the Court.

**AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE:** All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to [agenda@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:agenda@co.travis.tx.us) by **Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.

Project/Activities	Planning Estimate	Recommended PY13 Funding
<b>Owner Occupied Housing: Home Rehabilitation</b>	\$ 131,221	\$ 177,940
<b>Administration &amp; Planning</b>	\$170,303	\$181,985

Below is a schedule for the final approval of the PY 13 Action Plan:

June 11: Deadline: Court project approvals required  
June 18: Deadline: Court approval of Draft PY13 Action Plan  
June 24-July 24 : 30-day comment period for PY13 Action Plan  
*Includes two public hearings on July 2 and July 9*  
August 13 : Deadline: Court approval of PY13 Action Plan required  
August 15: Deadline: PY13 Action Plan Due to HUD

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

A. Staff recommends approving the following projects for funding in PY 13:

<b>Detailed Project Recommendations for PY13</b>	
<b>Community Development (must be at least 65 % of Total Allocation)</b>	
<b>Street Improvements: Lake Oak Estates</b> The project will improve several substandard roads in the neighborhood. The first phase of the project, funded with PY11 funds, included design, environmental and related services. The second phase of the project, funded in PY12 included construction of improvements for about half the roadways in the subdivision. During the third phase of the project, proposed for PY13, all streets will be completed. The project includes funds for a TNR Senior Engineer to act as a project manager. The improvements impact 126 people, of which, 86% are considered low to moderate income based on the primary survey.	\$425,000
<b>Owner Occupied Housing: Home Rehabilitation</b> This project will fund minor home repair services to move homes towards Housing Quality Standards to low and moderate income homeowners in the CDBG service area. The program seeks to improve the energy efficiency, physical living conditions, and safety in owner-occupied homes. A 0% interest, forgivable 5-year loan up to \$24,999 with no required annual or monthly payments is available. The impact will be 7 homes owned by households at or below 80% MFI.	\$ 177,940*
<b>Housing and Community Development total (66 %):</b>	
<b>\$ 602,940</b>	
<b>Public Services (capped at 15 % of Total Allocation)</b>	
<b>Social Work Expansion</b> This project funds the equivalent of one FTE social work position and related operating expenses to provide services to clients in the CDBG service area. Social Work services include case management, information and referral, non-clinical counseling, crisis intervention and	\$75,000

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to [agenda@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:agenda@co.travis.tx.us) by Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. for the next week's meeting.

outreach. This project will be administered by the Travis County HHS/VS, Family Support Services Division. The impact will be assistance to 400 individuals living at or below 80% MFI.	
<b>Tenant's Rights and Fair Housing Counseling</b> This program will expand existing fair housing and tenant's rights services in the CDBG service area, and proposes to serve approximately 68 people of which 51% must be at or below 80% MFI. Fair housing services include: fair housing counseling, fair housing complaint processing and testing in support of an individual complainant. Tenant's Rights services include: telephone counseling and in-person mediation, as needed. Additionally, part of the funds will be used for allowable program delivery costs such as marketing materials and office supplies.	\$50,000
<b>Public Service total (14 %):</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>
<b>Administration and Planning (capped at 20 % of Total Allocation)</b>	
<b>Administration &amp; Planning</b> The funds allocated for administration will pay for the operating expenses associated with the grant including office supplies, training, contracted services, interpreting, fair housing activities, membership, the Consolidated Plan and Action Plan, annual report, reporting and other business related expenses. Additionally, the funds will pay for a portion of the salaries for the CDBG Planners and the TNR Senior Engineer. These positions are responsible for project development, action plan and annual report development, monitoring, and reporting among others.	\$181,985
<b>Administration and Planning Total (20%):</b>	<b>\$181,985</b>
<b>Total award by HUD:</b>	<b>\$909,925</b>

\*Additional funds in the amount of \$33,885 of unallocated PY12 grant funds will be allocated to the Home Repair project for a total funding level in PY13 of \$211,825.

The proposed Alternate Projects for 2013 are:

<b>Proposed Alternate Projects for Program Year 2013</b>	
<b>Project/Activities</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Community Development</b>	
<b>Owner Occupied Housing: Home Rehabilitation</b> This project will fund minor home repair services to move homes towards Housing Quality Standards to low and moderate income homeowners in the CDBG service area. The program seeks to improve the energy efficiency, physical living conditions, and safety in owner-occupied homes. A 0% interest, forgivable 5-year loan up to \$24,999 with no required annual or monthly payments is available.	Up to \$1 million

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to [agenda@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:agenda@co.travis.tx.us) by Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. for the next week's meeting.

**Water, Wastewater and Design at Las Lomitas Neighborhood**

In order to get water and a wastewater solution to Las Lomitas, one of two directions can be taken.

- A. A two part project is proposed: 1) An assessment of existing conditions and a comprehensive comparison of the feasibility, costs, and benefits of conventional water and wastewater options versus sustainable alternatives; 2) Implementation of sustainable water, wastewater, and climatic intervention infrastructure, per the outcomes of the study, for qualifying residents.
- B. Traditional water connection, septic tank installation, design and easement acquisition.

Either way can achieve the end goal to get water and wastewater to the community. The CDBG Office will work with TNR to determine which strategy is most feasible given the funding and needs as we continue to develop the project. This first infusion of funding would potentially pay for design, acquisition, and wastewater. Las Lomitas serves about 146 people and 31 housing units.

Up to \$480,000

**ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:**

- A. All projects recommended are high priority projects as established by the Travis County Commissioners Court on May 24, 2011 for the Program Year 2011-2013 Consolidated Plan.

A brief summary of the project considerations can be found below:

- Street Improvements: Lake Oak Estates: 1) the first phase of the three year project was funded in PY11, and included design and environmental review, 2) the second phase of the project was funding in PY12 and includes construction of improvements for about half the roadways in the subdivision; 3) the third phase of the project is proposed for PY13 and would complete construction of remaining roadway improvements; 4) funding the construction phase allows the first phase to be an eligible expense; 5) the project improves the livelihood of a community and their ability to gain access to a safe and decent road; 6) TNR and the CDBG Office are currently working to resolve issues related to the acquisition of two easements to complete the project. As a federal project, the County may not require donation of easements, but if a change to the scope of the project needs to occur as a result, the Court will be notified.
- Home Rehabilitation: 1) improves quality of existing housing stock; 2) increases access to funding for repairs as few providers work in the CDBG service area; and 3) helps to address the current waiting list for the program; 4) the project was funded in PY12 and is currently being administered by Meals on Wheels and More, Inc.
- Public Services, Social Work Expansion: 1) improves access for households who need the services; 2) allows the County to better understand the needs in the

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to [agenda@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:agenda@co.travis.tx.us) by Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. for the next week's meeting.

unincorporated areas and work with other service providers to expand services; and 3) leverages funds.

- Tenant's Rights and Fair Housing Counseling: 1) helps the County meet a statutory requirement to meet federal Fair Housing obligations; 2) Residents of the CDBG service area have limited access to tenant's rights and fair housing services, the project increases access to services, training and outreach to all four precincts; 3) Austin Tenants Council can help residents determine if and how discrimination is occurring and take the appropriate actions to ameliorate the situation; 4) This work informs CDBG staff on the nature and extent of fair housing choice/discrimination facing residents of the CDBG service area.
  - Administration & Planning: 1) allows the grant to absorb more of the administrative cost of the program; 2) assists in timeliness achievement through drawing down funds consistently.
- B. Considering the inclusion of alternate projects allows for the pre-planning of unforeseen incidents, and allows the CDBG program to utilize the funds in a timely manner toward pre-identified alternate projects. Resources, including time and money, that would otherwise be used to add or delete projects through the customary Substantial Amendment process described in the Citizen Participation Plan can be saved. A brief summary of issues related to the Alternate Projects proposed for PY13 can be found below:
- Home Rehabilitation: Additional funds may be allocated to the existing Home Rehabilitation project from either or both of the following sources:
    - 1) Any unused funds from the Homebuyer Assistance Program that remain at the conclusion of the program administrator's contract on September 30, 2013.
    - 2) PY13 funds made available due to delays to Phase 3 of the Lake Oak Estates Road Project.
  - Las Lomitas: Water, Wastewater and Design 1) The neighborhood lacks water lines and connections and water is currently being transported in by home owners and stored in tanks; 2) The neighborhood also has the ability to address wastewater issues for those houses who need a more sustainable option; 3) The CDBG Office will need to request technical assistance from HUD to determine the eligibility of the feasibility study portion of the proposed project; 4) Adding as an alternate allows the project to move forward if the subdivision and tax issues are resolved.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

CDBG funding comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. For PY13, CDBG will continue to need the dollars allocated in the HHS/VS General Fund target budget, which will continue to support the CDBG Planning Project Manager and 40% of a CDBG Planner position. If the Court approves the grant projects, the grant will support 100% of one part-time CDBG Planner, 60% of a second CDBG

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to [agenda@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:agenda@co.travis.tx.us) by **Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.

Planner, and 50% of the TNR Senior Engineer and all operating expenses.

No matching funds are required for CDBG. Staff anticipates that the grant funds will be available by mid-October 2013. The contract period will be October 1st through September 30th annually.

**REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:**

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to [agenda@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:agenda@co.travis.tx.us) by **Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.