



Las Vegas

Agenda Item No.: 72.

AGENDA SUMMARY PAGE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF: MAY 6, 2009

DEPARTMENT: NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES
DIRECTOR: STEPHEN KUHARSIN

☐ Consent ☒ Discussion

SUBJECT:

Discussion and possible action regarding the City of Las Vegas Substantial Amendment to the 2008 Action Plan for the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) that secures \$2,105,118 as part of the American Recovery and Re-Investment Act (ARRA) of 2009 through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – All Wards

Fiscal Impact

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☐

No Impact

☐ Augmentation Required

Budget Funds Available

Amount:

Funding Source:

Dept./Division:

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

The American Recovery and Re-Investment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided approximately \$787 billion through various stimulus programs. The HPRP funding provided through ARRA is to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless or help those who are experiencing homelessness to be quickly re-housed and stabilized. In order to receive the \$2,105,118 allocation through HPRP, the City of Las Vegas must submit a Substantial Amendment to the 2008 Action Plan to HUD by May 18, 2009. The Substantial Amendment provides the strategies and uses of the funding.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Substantial Amendment to the 2008 Action Plan for the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) and authorizes the Director of Neighborhood Services to submit the plan to HUD and execute any and all related documents.

BACKUP DOCUMENTATION:

1. Substantial Amendment to the 2008 Action Plan for the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)
2. Submitted after Final Agenda PowerPoint Presentation by Staff

Motion made by GARY REESE to Approve

Passed For: 7; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

RICKI Y. BARLOW, LOIS TARKANIAN, STEVE WOLFSON, OSCAR B. GOODMAN,
GARY REESE, STEVEN D. ROSS, DAVID W. STEINMAN; (Against-None); (Abstain-None);
(Did Not Vote-None); (Excused-None)

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Minutes:

Using a PowerPoint Presentation which was submitted for the record, STEVE HARSIN, Director of the Neighborhood Services, explained that this item will help the City secure \$2.1 million in funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 for homeless prevention.

TIM WHITWRIGHT, Manager of Neighborhood Development, summarized the funds must be used to benefit households at or below 50 percent of area median income and only the minimum amount of assistance to prevent homelessness could be provided. Eligible activities include short-term and long-term assistance such as motel/hotel vouchers, rental assistance, security and utility deposits and moving costs. Tenant-based assistance helps families fill the gap between what they can afford for rent and utilities. Housing relocation and stabilization services are also eligible activities. Case management is critical for success and other activities include outreach and engagement, housing search and placement and credit repair.

He added that five percent of this grant can be used for administrative costs and the City was proposing to provide 2.5 percent to the non-profit organization associated with this program. Funds cannot be used by other programs funded through ARRA including mortgage costs, construction or rehabilitation of housing units, vehicle costs, consumer debt and medical costs. The deadline for submitting the plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is May 19, 2009 with completion of the agreements by September 30, 2009. Failure to meet these deadlines will result in the loss of the funding opportunity.

MR. WHITWRIGHT gave an overview of the programs budget: \$1.13 million for financial assistance, \$714,862.10 for housing relocation and stabilization services, five percent for administrative costs for a total of \$2.1 million.

DEPUTY CITY MANAGER ORLANDO SANCHEZ went over the Federal funding distribution for the State and the region. He noted that the Emergency Housing program is very successful and cost-effective in getting those in need into housing. The City's success rate is approximately 80 to 85 percent in preventing homelessness by allowing the recipients to stay in their homes and avoiding disruption to their lives and their neighborhoods.

A census of the homeless population is taken biannually. The most recent data indicates that there are 13,338 homeless people; 2,211 classified as chronic homeless, 2,251 classified as severely mentally ill and 3,652 classified as chronic substance abusers. The top four reasons for homelessness were job loss, alcohol or drug use, gambling problems or family issues.

DEPUTY CITY MANAGER SANCHEZ explained that the funds were targeted to the entire homeless population, but acknowledged the difficulties in helping the chronically homeless. He noted that 39 percent not classified as chronically homeless were the easiest to help. TARA ULMER, Homeless Administrator, stated that a census of the Main Street and Foremaster Lane area would be conducted to determine the specific services needed. The funds intended for homeless prevention were available to anyone who qualifies with the remaining funds targeted

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for the Main Street and Foremaster Lane area, the Corridor of Hope.

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN observed the difficulties in tracking many different funds and programs to help the homeless. She stressed the importance of record keeping to assist the City in learning which programs do or do not work. MS. ULMER noted that intensive case management and outreach is needed to help the chronically homeless. A pilot program was currently being planned for implementation in October 2009 to verify the effectiveness of the proposed services before the bulk of the funds is released. DEPUTY CITY MANAGER SANCHEZ stated that the pilot program would be funded through monies from the Redevelopment Agency and general funds budgeted for homelessness services. The information gathered through the pilot program will be used to gauge which services that are needed and how those services should be funded. He briefly went over the timeline for the program from obtaining funding through implementation.

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN pointed out that the homeless problem is not limited to the Main Street and Foremaster Lane area and requested that a report detailing how the monies are used and the success rate of each program be compiled. MS. ULMER noted that an evaluator would be part of this program to determine its effectiveness and will also examine other programs.

DEPUTY CITY MANAGER SANCHEZ noted that the \$210,000 for homeless prevention could help a minimum of 192 families. Also, the City is working with service providers, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (Metro) and other jurisdictions to develop a long-term strategy for dealing with homelessness.

COUNCILMAN REESE suggested that the City's efforts have not resolved the homeless problem and the problem persists in his Ward. The problem needs to be addressed regionally and the City also needs a way to help the mentally ill.

COUNCILMAN WOLFSON noted that DEPUTY CHIEF SCHOFIELD, Metro, has developed an action plan and expressed his confidence that this problem would be addressed with both short-term and long-term solutions.

DEPUTY CITY MANAGER SANCHEZ stated that the governmental entities were working as a region and briefly described the City's approach. He acknowledged the need to provide the mentally ill with their medication and to ensure that the medication was being taken appropriately, noting that success was more likely with effective case management. He listed the three teams which would be actively working in the Corridor of Hope. The Relocation Team will identify, assess and provide direct services; the Legal/Medical/Enforcement Team will identify and alleviate barriers to long-term housing; and the Ancillary Services Team will secure and provide daily living provisions following placement into housing.

COUNCILMAN BARLOW thanked MAYOR GOODMAN and COUNCILMAN WOLFSON for working on this issue as well as the service providers in the area for their assistance. He also thanked DEPUTY CHIEF SCHOFIELD for developing a workable plan for addressing the

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homeless. He noted the homeless problem runs the risk of driving businesses out of the area and emphasized the need to address this issue.

MAYOR GOODMAN suggested that current approaches to homelessness exacerbate the problem. He noted that the dangerous and criminal environment within the homeless community also needs to be addressed.

JOE MAVIGLIA suggested that the City's approach is completely wrong and that the City should help the people who are homeless through job loss. He stated that he has a project that will create jobs, help get people into homes and requested that the City consider his proposal.

TEDDY RUSSELL, Las Vegas resident, observed that Clark County is making steady progress in their efforts to address homelessness. He also thanked COUNCILMAN WOLFSON for his support of this issue and MS. ULMER for her hard work.

