



Agenda Item Summary

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Agenda Item Title

A Resolution Adopting the Village of Oak Park Residential Energy Efficiency Matching Grant Program Guidelines

Overview

On April 19, 2021, the Village Board approved a budget amendment of \$200,000 from the Sustainability Fund to expand CDBG/Sustainability Residential Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant Fund programs to all residents including homeowners, income-eligible tenants, and landlords for the direct benefit to renters.

Recommendation

Approve the Resolution

Fiscal Impact

The FY21 Sustainability Fund Budget had \$220,000 for the income-eligible single-family rehabilitation energy efficiency grant program. The \$200,000 budget amendment on April 19, 2021, increased the fund to \$420,000.

Background

The Residential Energy Efficiency Matching Grant Program Guidelines ("Guidelines") is modeled after a successful energy efficiency grant program that the Village participated in with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning as part of President Obama's federal stimulus program in 2010. Applicants were able to apply for additional funds to optimize energy efficiency. This new matching grant program was established to incentivize all residents to schedule a free energy assessment offered by the regional utilities to identify opportunities for energy-saving retrofits to reduce residential consumption of energy.

The Guidelines are designed to motivate residents to reduce their home's consumption of energy and help owner-occupied single-family owners with up to 4-Units install energy efficiency enhancements to improve occupant comfort and reduce energy costs. These guidelines extend the benefits of the program in a manner that would provide additional direct benefits to tenants living in up to 4-unit buildings. As an example, new LED lights use about 75 percent less energy and last 15 times longer than incandescent bulbs. Heating and cooling upgrades improve energy costs while providing more efficient temperature control, all while utilizing less energy. Installation of solar panels provides a renewable energy source to reduce emissions and fossil fuel consumption.

The Guidelines will allow applicants to apply for a 50% reimbursement of the total cost of energy improvements up to a maximum of \$10,000, for purposes of energy upgrades that increase building energy efficiency, reduce energy use and create savings by adding any or all of the following weatherization, cooling, heating, direct installs, and efficient lighting measures: 1.) The installation of insulation; 2.) The installation of energy-efficient lighting, including automatic light sensors or timed light sensors; 3.) The installation or upgrade of heating, venting and air conditioning (HVAC), including geothermal installation, and high-efficiency shower/faucet upgrades, including thermostat upgrades; 4.) Upgraded water heater; 5.) Air sealing; and/or 6.) Installation of solar panels to provide an alternative energy source.

Alternatives

Direct staff not to proceed with the Guidelines.

Previous Board Action

On March 22, 2021, the Board approved a motion for the use of sustainability funds and directed staff to create additional energy efficiency programming for the benefit of all residents including the expansion of income-eligible programs.

On June 28, 2021, staff presented a report on energy efficiency grant program development and the Board directed staff to ensure the resulting grant programs expanded reach to income-eligible residents and their landlords.

On July 19, 2021, and August 2, 2021, the Board approved three resolutions (SFR-091, SFR-092, SFR-090) authorizing single-family housing rehabilitation loans that included a cumulative total of \$10,800 in energy efficiency grant funding.

Citizen Advisory Commission Action

As advised previously by the EEC, all energy efficiency grant program activity will be captured quarterly and reported on the Oak Park Sustainability website dashboard along with existing energy assessments, community solar, weatherization, and rooftop solar information.

Anticipated Future Actions/Commitments

NA

Intergovernmental Cooperation Opportunities

NA