



Agenda Item Summary

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Submitted By

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Reviewed By

AMZ

Agenda Item Title

A Motion to Approve Village Staff Submission of a Grant Proposal Under the Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Grant Administered by the Cook County Department of Public Health

Overview

Staff is requesting that the Board approve a motion allowing staff to submit a grant proposal to the Cook County Department of Public Health for \$100,000 that would be invested in lead risk assessment and lead hazard control efforts by the Village's Department of Public Health and the Development Customer Services Department.

Recommendation

Approve the motion.

Fiscal Impact

If funded, the grant would add revenues for staff wages and salaries as well as contracted services for lead testing and hazard controls and will reduce the Village's reliance on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, freeing those funds up for other projects.

Background

The Village of Oak Park Health Department has an agreement with the Illinois Department of Public Health to manage childhood lead including managing and maintaining the State of Illinois' STELLAR database; a database that collects and stores childhood blood lead sampling data and environmental health investigation data. In 2020, the Health Department managed childhood blood lead test results. Among those blood lead results received were a number of venous and a number of capillary blood tests above 5 mcg/dl, all requiring various levels of Health Department follow-up including nursing case-management and environmental investigation and follow-up.

For many years, The Village of Oak Park has used a substantial allocation from its annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assist low-income households, earning less than 80% of Area Median Income (AMI) in both the control of lead-based paint hazards and the rehabilitation of their homes through a Single-Family Rehabilitation Loan Program (SFR). CDBG-funded housing rehabilitation projects require lead risk assessments and hazard reduction at three different levels of intensity depending on the total cost of the rehabilitation

project. The Village caps rehabilitation financing at \$25,000 and awards grants for identifying and controlling lead hazards based on that cap.

In 2015, the Village partnered with the Cook County Health Department to apply for funding from HUD under the Lead Hazard Reduction Grant program to provide federal funds to abate the lead hazards with homes built before 1978, which are occupied by at least one pregnant woman or child six years of age or younger. Since partnering with Cook County, the Village has been able to utilize Lead Grant funding for these activities instead of the Village's CDBG funding. Most recently, funds from this grant agreement were used to rehabilitate the Sojourn House on Austin Blvd., which would not have been available otherwise. The current grant agreement expires on November 30, 2021.

The Cook County grant is a three-year award with two, one-year options to renew. The amount of the grant has increased from the previous \$80,000 to \$100,000 with 10% of the total grant award being used for administration and 10% of the total grant award used for outreach and education activities. Additionally, the threshold for the income qualification has increased from less than 80% AMI to less than 120% AMI. This grant will also allow the Village to explore developing a Lead Hazard Reduction Only Grant Program for the gap between the current HUD SFR rehabilitation program of 80% AMI and the grant offered through Cook County at 120% AMI. More than 81.9% of the housing units (18,993 units) in the Village are structures built before 1970, which potentially could qualify for this new program.

Village Staff submitted a tentative grant proposal on Monday, November 29 as required by the Funding Application distributed by Cook County Department of Public Health. The application requests \$100,000 to support the projects described above. If the motion is not approved, staff will withdraw that application. If the Cook County Health Department approves the application, the Village will need to enter into an agreement with the County. That agreement would then come before the Village Board for approval in 2021.

Alternatives

If the motion is not approved by the Village Board, staff will withdraw the grant application.

Previous Board Action

On December 7, 2015, the Village Board approved a motion to apply to Cook County for grant funding. On January 19, 2016, the Village Board approved a Resolution Accepting a Cook County Department of Public Health Lead Poisoning Prevention Grant Award in the amount of \$160,000 and Authorizing the Execution of the Grant Agreement which allowed renewals as new funding is received by Cook County from the Federal Government. On March 19, 2018, the Village Board approved a Resolution approving a renewal of the Grant Agreement in an amount not to exceed \$240,000 over a three-year period. On February 1, 2021, the Village Board approved an extension of the grant agreement until November 30, 2021. On July 6, 2021, the Village Board approved a memorandum of understanding between the Village of Oak Park and the Cook County Department of Public Health to apply for additional funding from HUD for Lead Removal Activities.

Citizen Advisory Commission Action

N/A

Anticipated Future Actions/Commitments

N/A

Intergovernmental Cooperation Opportunities

This grant allows us to cooperate with Cook County.