

AGENDA



Thursday, September 24, 2009

**Health and Human Services
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

Item No. 39

Subject: Authorize negotiation and execution of three contracts effective October 1, 2009 to provide employment-related services and assistance from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Community Service Block Grant Recovery Act Fund with the following providers: CARITAS OF AUSTIN in an amount not to exceed \$453,872; AUSTIN FAMILIES, INC. (DBA FAMILYCONNECTIONS) in an amount not to exceed \$225,000; and WORKSOURCE –GREATER AUSTIN AREA WORKFORCE BOARD (DBA WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS-CAPITAL AREA WORKFORCE BOARD) in an amount not to exceed \$500,000.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding in the amount of \$1,178,872 is available in the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Operating Budget of the Health and Human Services Department Special Revenue Fund, Community Services Block Grant Recovery Act Fund. The contract period is October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010. The grant period is August 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010.

Fiscal Note: There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

For More Information: Vince Cobalis, Asst. Director, Human Services, 972-5011; Cathleen Rodriguez, HHS Manager, Healthy Neighborhood Unit, 972-5092; Linda Terry, Agenda Coordinator, 972-5023.

Boards and Commission Action: Recommended by the Health and Human Services Subcommittee.

Prior Council Action: Council approved the ordinance accepting the CSBG Recovery Act funds and amending the Fiscal Year 2008-09 HHSD Operating Budget, July 23, 2009.

BACKGROUND

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 provides for \$1 billion in additional funds to the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program for FY 2009 and 2010. The State of Texas CSBG program will receive \$48,148,071. As the existing CSBG eligible entity for Travis County, the City of Austin will receive \$1,430,692 in direct funds from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). CSBG eligible entities are to utilize funds for employment-related services and activities. In addition, eligible entities are encouraged to coordinate projects and activities with other programs or organizations that are also receiving stimulus funds. This grant will be funded and tracked separately from the standard CSBG program as the CSBG-ARRA Local Plan.

CSBG ARRA has two primary goals: (1) Provide supplemental funding to the existing CSBG program; and (2) Support employment related services and activities that create and sustain economic growth

The recommended contracts support activities designed to remove obstacles and solve problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency, to secure and retain meaningful employment, to address the needs of youth in low-income communities and to obtain emergency assistance to meet immediate and urgent family needs.

Request for Application (RFA) was released for fiscal agent responsibilities for the entire CSBG direct financial assistance funds. Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) was released for a social service organization to provide child care referrals and vouchers resulting in one respondent. WorkSource –

Greater Austin Area Workforce Board (dba Workforce Solutions-Capital Area Workforce Board) was recommended since they are the designated workforce agency for Austin/Travis County. Based on the results of this competitive process, the following contracts will be negotiated.

CSBG Fiscal Agent – \$453,872

Caritas of Austin will serve as the Fiscal Agent for the CSBG Financial Assistance component, processing and tracking financial assistance payments to landlords and utility companies on behalf of CSBG clients. This component was competed in RFA 2009-03.

CSBG Child Care Services – \$225,000

Austin Families, Inc. (dba FamilyConnections) will provide child care referrals and vouchers to families who are clients of the Healthy Neighborhood Unit Case Management Program, and to coordinate the services with CSBG Social Workers.

CSBG Workforce Development - \$500,000

WorkSource –Greater Austin Area Workforce Board (dba Workforce Solutions-Capital Area Workforce Board) will provide onsite services at the neighborhood centers to include case management and assessment for enrollment into Workforce Solutions programs, occupational skills training and pre-apprentice training. Employment support services will also be provided including tools, uniforms, medical tests, ID fees, transportation. Services will be delivered by onsite Workforce Solutions' Program Specialists.

Attachment A provides the performance measures for each of the above-referenced contracts.

In addition to these contracted services, the CSBG-ARRA grant will be used to expand the Youth Development Program for high-risk youth, increase the availability of case managed social work and expand hours at certain Neighborhood Centers.