

MEMORANDUM

TO: Steve Ehlmann, County Executive

FROM: Michael Hurlbert, AICP, Director of Community Development

CC: Rory O'Sullivan, Acting County Counselor

SUBJECT: Items for the March 8, 2021 County Council meeting: (1) a public hearing to amend the County's Consolidated Plan and 2019 Annual Action Plan, and (2) a bill to approve CDBG plans and accept CDBG-CV funding in the amount of \$1,060,488

DATE: February 11, 2021

The Community Development Department hereby submits two items to be placed on the March 8, 2021 County Council Agenda:

- A public hearing to receive final comments on amending the County's CDBG Consolidated Plan (2016 – 2020) and CDBG 2019 Annual Action Plan; and
- A bill to amend the CDBG Consolidated Plan (2016-2020), 2019 Annual Action Plan, and 2021 County budget.

The purpose of these two items is to accept and program supplemental Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV) funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) made available through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). The St. Charles Urban County will receive an additional **\$1,060,488** in CDBG-CV funding.

Background

St. Charles County is the responsible agency for the St. Charles Urban County, a cooperative arrangement allowing nine jurisdictions (the City of St. Charles, City of St. Peters, City of St. Paul, City of Lake St. Louis, City of Cottleville, City of Wentzville, City of Weldon Spring, City of New Melle and unincorporated St. Charles County) to collectively receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The Urban County was allocated **\$1,074,952** in FY2019 CDBG funds and the County's 2019 Annual Action plan was approved by the County Council through Council Ordinance No. 19-042.

In 2020, St. Charles County received a supplemental allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV) funds in the amount of **\$646,001** to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This allocation was authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Public Law 116-136, which was signed by President Donald J. Trump on March 27, 2020.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has notified the County that it will receive an additional allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV) funds in the amount of **\$1,060,488**. An amendment to the County's CDBG Consolidated Plan and 2019 Annual Action Plan are proposed to utilize these funds.

Public Comment Period and Process

The CARES Act affords jurisdictions such as St. Charles County the latitude to adopt CDBG plans and programs with compressed timelines and alternative means for public input such as remote participation. A revised CDBG Citizen Participation Plan allows public comment periods as short as five days when responding to declared disasters and states of emergency. The County is holding a public comment period on these plan amendments through **March 15, 2021**. An [online survey](#) has been shared with governmental jurisdictions, not-for-profit agencies, housing providers, businesses, and others to identify and prioritize community needs. The Community Council of St.

Charles County and the Tri-County Continuum of Care have assisted the County in identifying increased community needs due to COVID-19. The County Council is asked to hold a formal public hearing at its March 8, 2020 meeting to finalize public comments on the proposed use of CDBG-CV funds and amendments to CDBG plans.

Major Amendments to the Urban County’s Five-Year Consolidated Plan and 2019 Annual Action Plan

Major amendments proposed through the attached bill would program **\$1,060,488** in CDBG-CV funds to be received by the Urban County. The programs proposed in the amendments can be broadly categorized in the areas of public services (61% of funding: \$650,000), small business assistance (19% of funding: \$200,000), and administration (20% of funding: \$210,488). Approval of the attached bill would add the following programs to both the Consolidated Plan and 2019 Annual Action Plan:

Administration	\$210,488	20%
Program Funding	\$850,000	80%
CV-Small Business Assistance	\$200,000	19%
CV-Public Services (PS)	\$650,000	61%
PS-Mental Health Assistance	\$350,000	33%
PS-Rent/Mortgage/Utility/Food Assistance	\$140,000	13%
PS-Coordinated Entry Total	\$160,000	15%
Total Allocation	\$1,060,488	100%

- **CV – Small Business Assistance Program** (\$200,000): Offers up to \$10,000 assistance to a qualifying small business applicant to cover business expenses including, but not limited to, employee wages, inventory costs, vendor and utility bills, and rent/mortgage to ensure business remaining in operation and retaining low-to-moderate income employees. Assistance will be targeted specifically to help small businesses with 7 to 50 employees and a physical commercial location within the Urban County.
- **CV - Public Services – Mental Health Assistance** (\$350,000): Includes psychiatry, outpatient therapy, and/or case management services assistance up to

six months to St. Charles County uninsured residents via mental health service providers such as Compass Health.

- **CV - Public Services - Rent, Mortgage, Utility, Food Assistance Program** (\$140,000): Includes household rent, mortgage or utility assistance up to six months to reduce foreclosures, evictions, utility shutoffs, and to prevent dislocation and homelessness. Provides funding to eligible agencies for food pantries and similar programs to serve County residents needing food.
- **CV - Public Services - Coordinated Entry Program** (\$160,000): Provides additional financial support for the Coordinated Entry Program over the next few years to increase the Program's capacity to serve County residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Funding would allow the hiring of additional case managers or similar needs to keep up with demand due to COVID-19 impact.

The Community Development Department respectfully submits the attached ordinance for the County Council's consideration and approval.