



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Meeting: December 3, 2019

Subject

Consider out-of-cycle Community Funding Grant of \$5,000 for West Valley Community Services.

Recommended Action

Consider an out-of-cycle Community Funding Grant request of \$5,000 for West Valley Community Services Gift of Hope Program and either:

- Approve a Community Funding Grant of \$5,000 for West Valley Community Services Gift of Hope Program, or
- Recommend that West Valley Community Services apply for a Community Funding Grant during the City's regular grant process.

Discussion

A Community Funding Grant request of \$5,000 was received for West Valley Community Services' (WVCS) Gift of Hope Program. Consideration of this funding request would occur outside of the City's regular Community Funding Grant Program process. Community Funding opportunities are made available to local non-profits on February 1st of every year with applications due on March 1st followed by a review of applications and recommendations by the Parks and Recreation Commission. If this funding is approved, it would be a stand-alone Community Funding Grant rather than be a requests that is considered among other applicants.

WVCS is a non-profit organization that has been providing safety net services to low income and homeless individuals and families in the West Valley region of Santa Clara County for more than 45 years. WVCS offers a range of services, targeting families with children, at-risk youth, seniors, individuals, and disabled adults who are extremely low-income, living on a fixed-income, homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless. In 2019, WVCS was awarded a Community Funding Grant of \$20,000 for its Pantry Overhang program through the City's regular grant process.

The additional funding request would be for the Gift of Hope Program, which was started to combat the stress and hopelessness that families living in poverty face during the holidays, with the goal of creating hopefulness and possibilities. This Program provides gifts and food to homeless and low-income families living in the service area during the December holiday

season. Gifts include traditional items, such as toys and small household appliances, in addition to seasonally appropriate clothing items that families cannot afford, such as jackets, gloves, hats, warm socks, and blankets. In addition to providing much needed items to families struggling financially, it relieves the stress caused by the pressure to engage in holiday spending that low-income families cannot afford. The Gift of Hope Program also allows families living in poverty to preserve household assets that would have been spent on holiday gifts so that they can be spent on critical household needs such as rent, utilities, and food. As part of the FY20 Community Funding process, in February 2019, WVCS applied for a Community Funding Grant for FY20 and was awarded \$20,000 for a pantry overhang that will help to optimize food operation during inclement weather, improving client and volunteer experience.

Current Community Funding Policy

The City of Cupertino currently provides funding to local non-profit organizations. The current Community Funding Policy establishes a standard application process whereby funding decisions for non-profit requests can be addressed on a fair and consistent basis by establishing a set of criteria for evaluating all requests, ensuring that entities follow a formal application process, and pre-approving a dollar limit for those requests. (Attachment A).

Current Community Funding Process

At the Budget Adoption hearing in June 2018, Council requested that the Community Funding Program be updated to ensure that all applications receive due consideration and that Council is provided with all information necessary to make the final funding decisions. Council requested that the Parks and Recreation Commission evaluate all grant applications and provide funding recommendations to Council for consideration.

On March 7, 2019, staff introduced the revised Community Funding Program to the Parks and Recreation Commission. The updated process includes the following:

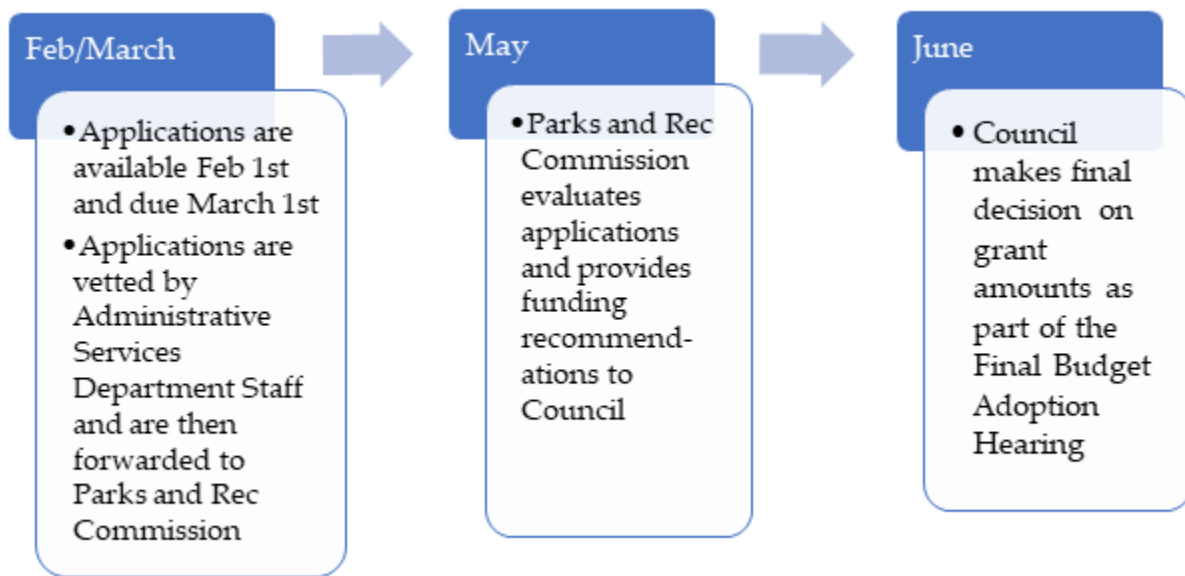
- All applications are due March 1. The Administrative Services Department reviews application for compliance with eligibility criteria and availability of funds. Staff may seek additional information from applicant as necessary.
- Eligible applications are then forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission for a review and recommendation to the Council regarding grant approval and funding amounts:

Additionally, staff developed criteria based on Council direction and best practices in other cities. The evaluation criteria include the following:

- Impact on and benefit to the Cupertino community
- Community need for the program/project/event
- Alignment with City priorities
- Uniqueness of the program/project/event
- Qualifications and experience of the organization and its staff
- Reasonable cost
- Demonstrated effort to secure funding from other sources

- Clarity, completeness, and accuracy of grant application
- Past performance and compliance with requirements if a recurring applicant

The current Community Funding Grant process requires organizations to submit a formal grant application that is first vetted by Administrative Services Department Staff to ensure minimum qualifications are met and is then forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission for further evaluation. The Parks and Recreation Commission then forwards their funding recommendation to Council during the Proposed Budget Study Session in May. Council makes the final decision on grant amounts for each applicant as part of the Final Budget Adoption Hearing which typically happens in June. The chart below summarizes this process:



If this funding application is approved, it will be an exception to the current policy and process for community funding grants.

Funding Options

There are 2 options to consider in this out-of-cycle funding request:

- Option A – Approve the Community Funding Grant request of \$5,000 for WVCS Gift of Hope Program
- Option B – Recommend WVCS apply for Community Funding Grant during regular grant process as summarized above

Sustainability Impact

No sustainability impact.

Fiscal Impact

If approved, this would increase Community Funding expenditures by \$5,000, funded by unassigned general fund fund balance.

Prepared by: Toni Oasay-Anderson, Management Analyst

Reviewed by: Kristina Alfaro, Director of Administrative Services

Approved for Submission by: Deborah L. Feng, City Manager

Attachments:

A – Community Funding Policy

B – Community Funding Grant Application for Gift of Hope