

Concord grants fund projects for homeless, youth, seniors

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CONCORD -- Programs that serve seniors, young people and the homeless are a few of the recipients of the city's community grants for the upcoming fiscal year.

Concord will receive \$907,860 in federal community development block grant funds, an increase of \$36,287 over the allocation it received for fiscal year that ends June 30.

With additional funds that have been reallocated, the city has a total of \$1,082,860 in CDBG funds to disburse in fiscal year 2014-2015, according to Marla Parada, a program manager in the Parks and Recreation Department.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awards community development block grant funding to local governments across the country to support programs and services that benefit people with low incomes.

The City Council recently approved grants for the upcoming fiscal year, including \$221,937 to the city's housing preservation program to provide loans to low-income Concord residents for home repairs; \$361,600 for infrastructure improvements to improve accessibility citywide such as installing sidewalks and curb ramps; and \$90,786 for code enforcement at low-income, multifamily housing units.

Thirteen public service agencies will share \$136,179, including Monument Crisis Center, Meals on Wheels of Contra Costa, Food Bank of Contra Costa, and Community Violence Solutions.

Concord also will use \$24,000 in child care development fees, which the city collects from developers, to fund free, on-site afterschool programs for more than 1,000 elementary and middle school students in the Mt. Diablo Unified School District.

"It's great that we're doing this," Councilman Ron Leone said. "When I'm able to see ... we're helping those that are in need in our community, including the seniors, the poor, I think that's great ."

Concord is part of the Contra Costa County HOME Consortium with Antioch, Walnut Creek, Pittsburg and unincorporated areas of the county. To determine community needs that will influence CDBG funding priorities for the period from 2015-2020, the consortium is seeking feedback from residents on a survey and in a series of public workshops.

"The feedback that we get from the surveys strongly steers us in the direction of the funding priorities," Parada said, adding that the city does have some discretion.

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community workshop and survey

Residents may fill out a survey to identify needs in the community and help set funding priorities at www.cccounty.us/conplan. The deadline is June 30.

The public also is invited to attend an informational workshop at 6:30 p.m. May 29, at Walnut Creek Civic Park Community Center Lounge, 1375 Civic Drive. For more information, call Margot Ernst at 925-943-5899, ext. 2208.