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**Title:** Approve agreement between the City of Fresno and Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministry (FIRM) in the amount of \$459,266.79 in Community Development Block Grant - Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds to provide tenant and landlord counseling.

**Sponsors:** Planning and Development Department

**Indexes:**

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**Attachments:** 1. Subrecipient Agreement with FIRM for Tenant and Landlord Counseling

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
3/30/2023	1	City Council	ADOPTED	Pass

**REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

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**SUBJECT**

Approve agreement between the City of Fresno and Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministry (FIRM) in the amount of \$459,266.79 in Community Development Block Grant - Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds to provide tenant and landlord counseling.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends the City Council approve a subrecipient agreement with FIRM to fund the provision of a tenant and landlord counseling program for individuals impacted by COVID-19.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City Council previously approved CDBG-CV funds for a tenant and landlord counseling program. The City released a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to invite applicants to apply for funding for tenant and landlord counseling. Two applications were received and assessed by staff which is

proposing to award \$459,266.79 in CDBG-CV funds to FIRM for its proposed tenant and landlord counseling program for individuals impacted by COVID-19.

## **BACKGROUND**

As part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), HUD allocated additional entitlement funds to the City of Fresno to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus (COVID-19) through CDBG-CV funds.

On February 18, 2021, the Council adopted Substantial Amendment 2019-06 through Resolution 2021-049 allocating \$480,000 of CDBG-CV funds for a tenant and landlord counseling program for individuals impacted by COVID-19. On September 16, 2021, Council approved a \$100,000 agreement with Community Housing Council of Fresno (CHC) for tenant and landlord counseling. Despite marketing efforts, CHC was unable to attract many clients who needed the services and only expended \$20,733.21 of the available funds making \$459,266.79 available for an additional program.

A NOFA was published on December 19, 2022, to invite qualified applicants to request funding to provide tenant and landlord counseling. Two applications were received and evaluated by staff. One application, from FIRM, was determined to be eligible while the second, from Horseback Ministry Inc., was found to be ineligible. Staff found FIRM's application to be responsive and recommends awarding the \$459,266.79 in CDBG-CV funds for its proposed tenant and landlord counseling program.

FIRM's proposed program would provide tenant-landlord counseling for low-income individuals impacted by COVID-19 to prevent potential evictions. FIRM anticipates serving 650 individuals and will use various methods of outreach and information in multiple languages to promote the services including the use of a page on its website that will explain the program and the services available at no cost to the tenants or landlords. FIRM will help tenants develop a crisis budget, develop an action plan, and provide information regarding fair housing laws as they relate to tenant-landlord relationships.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS**

This is not a project for purposes of CEQA pursuant to CEQA guidelines Section 15378. These plans, strategies and studies are an exempt activity under HUD NEPA Requirements (24 CFR 58.34 (1)).

## **LOCAL PREFERENCE**

Local preference is not applicable because of the use of federal funding.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact because no funds are being reprogrammed.

Attachments: Subrecipient Agreement with FIRM for Tenant and Landlord Counseling

