

**September 29, 2022**

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**A. CALL TO ORDER BY PRESIDING OFFICER & WELCOME**

The Gresham Community Development and Housing Subcommittee (CDHS) meeting was called to order by Uriah Edmunds, Chair, at 5:30 P.M. on the twenty-ninth day of September 2022. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was held remotely via Zoom.

CDHS COMMITTEE PRESENT: Uriah Edmunds, Christine Bierman, Delores Burgos, Ryan Johnson, Bobbie Bowman Meza

CDHS COMMITTEE NOT PRESENT: Anastasia Linden, Aaron Montgomery, Heather Ricks, Jessica Spellman, April Johnson, William Davis

STAFF PRESENT: Ashley Miller, Community Revitalization Manager; Rachel Nehse, Program Analyst

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilor Dina DiNucci

**B. Review 2021-2022 CAPER**

Ashley shared an introduction to the CAPER.

The City of Gresham receives an annual entitlement of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The City also receives HOME funds as part of the HOME Consortium with the City of Portland and Multnomah County. The City of Portland is the lead agency in the HOME Consortium.

The Consolidated Plan (Con Plan) is a five-year plan that assesses local affordable housing and community development needs, identifies community priorities, and sets goals related to these priorities.

The Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) outlines the goals and achievements of the CDBG projects funded by the City of Gresham each fiscal year. Although achievement data for projects funded with HOME dollars are included in the City of Portland's CAPER, as Consortium lead, we report on progress of HOME funded projects and goals in our CAPER. In 2020-21, the City also received 1.3 million dollars in CDBG-CV funds to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. While these funds are not tied to a specific fiscal year or the current Annual Action Plan, CDBG-CV funds spent in 2021-22 are reported on in the 2021 CAPER. The 2021 CAPER is the first of five yearly reports of the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan.

Rachel shared and reviewed a summary of the CAPER report. It is organized by Con Plan goals and tracks our progress towards those 5-year goals for what we submitted to HUD in our 2021-2025 Con Plan. This is one single years' worth of progress that's reflected in the 5-year goals.

Rachel shared that the 1st goal is to Increase & Preserve Affordable Housing Choice.

The City allocated \$180,000 in CDBG funds to Unlimited Choices to fund two programs targeting some of Gresham's most vulnerable populations. Adapt-A-Home completed 20 rehabilitation and accessibility projects. Mend-A-Home provided critical home repair, such as roof repair and electrical work, for 18 homeowners. Unlimited Choices makes accessibility and safety improvements to homes so that low-income households can stay safely housed in their existing homes.

Community Energy Project, Inc. was granted \$7,304 in CDBG funds to provide Do-It-Yourself Weatherization Workshops available to Gresham households remotely. Both renters and homeowners are eligible for the workshops. 35 Gresham households received information on making their homes more energy efficient. 86% of workshop participants served were low- or extremely low-income and 91% were from communities of color.

WELCOME HOME is a City-managed down payment assistance program for moderate- and low-income homebuyers funded with HOME dollars. The program provided 1 down payment assistance loan totaling \$20,000 in 2021-22.

Proud Ground is a community land trust that provides homebuyer assistance to low- and moderate-income homebuyers. In 2021-22 the program utilized \$238,500 in HOME funds and assisted 3 Gresham first time homebuyers.

These programs are funded with HOME, so the City does not report on or track goals for HUD. The City plans to provide down payment assistance loans for up to 15 households each fiscal year. Proud Ground fell short of their annual goal of 4 households served in 2021-22 and served 3 households. The WELCOME HOME program also struggled in 2021-22 and served a single household. Both programs experienced difficulties in 2021-22 due to the high demand for homes and relatively low stock of affordable homes on the market.

Rachel shared that our 2nd goal is to Reduce & Prevent Homelessness.

The City spent \$47,173 in CDBG funds and \$200,598.66 in HOME funds to Human Solutions for their Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program. The program provided between 2 and 10 months of direct rent assistance to 32 at-risk Gresham households comprised of 43 adults and 46 children to prevent eviction, which fell short of their goal to assist 40 households.

The City provided \$41,292.98 in CDBG funds to Human Solutions for their Willow Tree program. The program served 48 houseless and at-risk individuals. Willow Tree aimed to serve 90 individuals but was still unable to hold classes in 2021-22 due to the pandemic.

Rachel shared that our 3rd goal is Livability & Economic Opportunity.

The City funded the Latinx Economic Stability Service Project by El Programa Hispano Católico (EPHC) to provide culturally specific job training and placement services. This program spent \$50,976.41 and assisted 27 Gresham residents, 86% of whom were low- or very low-income. This program did not achieve its goal of serving 65 individuals in 2021-22 due in part to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The City allocated \$17,306 in CDBG funds to Family of Friends, which funded 1 new match for Gresham children and supported 5 existing matches. This fell short of their annual goal of 5 new matches due to limitations caused by the pandemic.

The City provided \$18,156.65 in CDBG funds to Metropolitan Family Services (MFS) to fund the AARP Experience Corps program at Davis Elementary. The program matched older adults with at-risk kindergarten through third grade students to provide one on one and small group mentoring and tutoring to each child. Mentors exceeded annual goals by providing support for 204 students in 10 classrooms.

The City provided \$24,000 in CDBG funds to Eastside Timbers for their youth soccer program. This program aimed to serve up to 300 Gresham youth by providing two seasons of after school recreation league soccer at no cost to the participants. Due to the pandemic and bus shortages, Eastside was forced to pivot and adapt their usual recreation league and after school soccer programs. They merged the two programs, providing after-school league soccer to Gresham youth at or near their school sites so that travel between school and the practice space wasn't a barrier for participants. Over the school year 152 students participated, with some participating in both seasons.

East County Solutions is a certified Community Based Development Organization in Gresham and operates the Living Solutions program to promote the economic well-being of low-income Gresham residents. The program received \$242,427.96 in CDBG funds from the City and nearly met its annual goal of 110 by providing 97 Gresham residents with job training and placement. 96% of clients served under this program were low- or very low-income.

In 2020-21, the City allocated funding to clean up contaminated sites on City property or in public parks to remove hazardous materials left behind at former illegal camp and dumping sites and remove hazardous RVs illegally left in the public right of way. RVs towed toward the end of 2020-21 were disposed of in 2021-22 using remaining CDBG funds in this project. In 2021- 22, the City used \$14,007 in CDBG funds to dispose of 6 RVs towed in 2020-21.

The Contaminated Site Clean Up projects were only funded in 2020-21, so they were not included in the 2021-2025 Con Plan goals. Other Facilities and Infrastructure projects included in the goal will begin in 2022-23.

Micro Enterprise Services of Oregon (MESO) provides technical assistance and training for Gresham small businesses with 5 or fewer employees. MESO used \$33,875.29 in CDBG to provide services for 12 low-income Gresham business owners whose incomes were 50% MFI or lower. This program did not achieve its planned annual goal of 25 businesses served due in part to capacity. MESO was simultaneously providing a COVID response business assistance program with CDBG-CV

Rachel shared that we have a number of pandemic response programs that are technically tied to the previous compland. These don't pull into the numbers in the CAPER.

HUD allocated approximately \$1.3 million in CDBG-CV funding to Gresham for CDBG eligible projects that respond to, prevent or alleviate the impacts of the Coronavirus Pandemic. These funds may be spent over several years and the City has allocated the funds to various projects assisting low- and moderate-income households. Several projects began serving Gresham residents in 2020-21 and continued into 2021-22. Additional projects began in 2021-22 and several projects will continue to serve residents into 2022-23. Data listed in the sections below reflects the program to date totals for each program.

The City spent \$341,048.47 in CDBG-CV to cover water usage costs for Gresham renter and homeowners at or below 60% median family income who have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. This program was administered internally by City staff. The funding was used to provide up to six months of assistance per household to help stabilize families and avoid service shut offs. The program began serving residents 2020-21 and continued through the 2021- 22 year. The program has assisted 4,949 Gresham residents to date and will continue to serve Gresham residents into 2022-23.

The City spent \$78,756.71 in CDBG-CV funds to cover Solid Waste & Recycling bills for Gresham renters and homeowners at or below 60% median family income who have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. This program was administered internally by City staff and payments were made directly to the haulers on behalf of Gresham residents. The funding was used to provide up to six months of assistance per household to help stabilize families and avoid trash service shut offs. The program began serving households in 2020-21 and the program concluded in 2021-22, serving a total of 1,186 individuals.

El Programa Hispano Catolico has spent \$41,215.37 for their Feed the Community program, which provides meal assistance to COVID impacted households. The program prioritizes assistance for households who are quarantining due to COVID infection or exposure and households who lost income due to the pandemic. The program began in late 2020-21, continued to serve households throughout 2021-22 and will continue to serve household into early 2022-23. To date this program has assisted 137 low-income Gresham residents with meals and food boxes.

Human Solutions utilized \$125,064 in CDBG-CV funds to provide emergency subsistence payments for rent for COVID impact Gresham residents. Payments for up to 6 consecutive months of rent were provided to stabilize 53 Gresham residents and prevent eviction. This program served residents in 2021-22 and has spent down all allocated funding.

Human Solutions provided a utility assistance program for COVID impacted Gresham residents and expanded the service to include rent assistance late in 2021-22. This program began serving residents in August 2021 and spent \$82,659.16 assisting 121 people over the 2021-22 fiscal year. This program will continue to serve residents into the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Friends of the Children received \$175,216 to provide youth mentoring to 61 Gresham low-income youth to help alleviate the impacts of the pandemic and remote schooling on families. Mentoring included one on one outings and group trips to keep youth engaged in healthy, safe activities and alleviate the social and emotional stresses of the pandemic.

MESO was awarded \$110,000 for their COVID response microenterprise assistance program, which provided business assistance and grants to help small Gresham businesses overcome the impacts of the ongoing pandemic. This program served clients throughout the 2021-22 program year and assisted 25 COVID impacted small businesses.

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic Gresham City Council voted to utilize HUD's public services waiver for 2020 entitlement funds spent on projects that alleviate the impacts of the pandemic and reallocated \$150,000 CDBG funds for emergency subsistence payments and meal assistance for low- and moderate-income families negatively impacted by the pandemic.

El Programa Hispano Catolico utilized \$106,612.13 in CDBG and CDBG-CV funds to provide "income payments" for Gresham households impacted by the pandemic. "Income Payments" may pay for up to six months of basic household bills including rent and utilities to help stabilize households and prevent houselessness. The program began serving Gresham residents in April 2021 and services continued until September 2021. Over the course of the program 135 Gresham residents were served.

The City funded Meals on Wheels People with CDBG funds for program expenses and CDBG-CV funds for admin to provide meal assistance to Gresham children their caretakers in response to the pandemic. The program spent a total of \$55,000 in CDBG funding and delivered 9,139 culturally specific meals to 115 individuals in Gresham.

### **C. Public Comment**

Ashley stated that we were supposed to accept public comment but there were no members of the public to present public comment. She then welcomed questions from everyone.

Uriah asked that if anyone says Does Not Meet and that gets reported back, does it disqualify them from future projects, or what does that entail if your outline did not meet expectations? Ashley responded that HUD wants you to set goals and wants you to report on them, but they also have a narrative section, and you can explain why someone didn't meet their goals. It doesn't disqualify them for future funding.

Councilor DiNucci asked that when it comes to saying how many people they served, is that new people outside of what their service group was? Rachel responded that it was difficult to say and generally it does add an increase in service.

Bobbie commented on the capacity issues that some of the services are experiencing. She was wondering if it's to the benefit of the community that we give lower amounts to a wider variety of service providers to try to get some of that money out the door when people need it the most. Ashley responded this was a good observation. She added they heard resoundingly during the pandemic that there were so many assistance funding streams going out all over the place that everyone was just overwhelmed with getting the funding out. She said she's hopeful it will be better going forward.

Christine asked if the capacity issues are related to staffing issues. Ashley responded that, yes, some of them were related and we are seeing it globally.

Councilor DiNucci was curious if all the money that didn't get spent will go back into the budget for future years. Ashley confirmed yes.

Ashley mentioned there were still no public comments. She noted they are also accepting comments via email and phone; it's not just tonight that they are accepting comments.

### **D. Metro Housing Bond Discussion**

Ashley gave an overview of the Metro Housing Bond by sharing a presentation. She started by saying that the bond was passed by metro area voters in 2018 and will invest a total of \$652.8 million in affordable housing development in the metro area. It's to be divided into 7 jurisdictions. Gresham's local share of the funding totals \$26.7 million. The policy priorities are home ownership, rehabilitation of existing properties, and new construction of affordable housing. Gresham's unit production targets include 187 overall units created, 77 of which need

to be deeply affordable and 93 need to be family units. Developments with new construction must remain affordable for a period of 60 years.

City Council selected 2 rental projects to fund, which were the Albertina Kerr-Wynne Watts Commons for \$11.2 million and Rockwood Village for \$5.1 million. In 2021, Metro allocated some additional funding. To date, Gresham has committed a total of \$16.5 million and there's \$10.5 million remaining.

Ashley shared that Gresham's strategy has metrics to meet. With those two developments, Gresham has exceeded the total number of units and has met the target for the number of units for people at or below 30% AMI. The one remaining metric is family-sized units. Gresham just needs to produce 23 of these units with the remaining funding to meet all our goals.

For the remaining \$10.5 million, Ashley shared that we will likely issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) either late this year or early next year for additional investments. There is strong community and City Council interest in affordable homeownership in engagement to date. There have been recent meetings with developers for affordable rental and ownership projects in Gresham, and there will be a council discussion on October 4th.

Ashley said that we do have the ability to potentially issue an RFP for homeownership projects. We could issue an RFP for the new construction of affordable housing, which is what we have funded so far. Also eligible is the rehabilitation of existing properties. Or we could issue an RFP that is a combination of those. For today, Ashley wanted to gauge the CDHS feedback and potential priorities. She opened it up for any feedback on the next \$10.5 million and how the City should invest that.

Bobbie spoke up to say that homeownership completely changes people's lives. She worries how unattainable homeownership is becoming with the prices going up, and she feels that should be the priority in Gresham.

Delores agreed with Bobbie. She was curious about assisting future homeowners with not only homeowner education and downpayment assistance, but also debt relief.

Uriah added that we should support homeownership in any way we can. He feels it's imperative that we continue to find ways to support it. It has to be a balance in the community we're serving.

Councilor DiNucci felt that it would be nice to rehabilitate a complex and make it a much better neighborhood building, rather than start from scratch all the time.

Delores agreed with Councilor DiNucci but had a serious issue with people saying affordable housing since it's not really affordable to all income levels. She said that when we talk about affordable housing, we need to be more specific and really address who it's affordable to. Ashley agreed and said it's why we have certain goals.

Ryan shared that he was trying to figure out what to do. The positive thing is that housing prices are dropping but the negative thing is that interest rates are going up. He felt it was a tough one to come up with a solution.

Ashley and Rachel shared that it's been a turbulent couple of years for their home buyer programs due to the interest rates. Ashley did note that they increased the maximum amount in

those down payment assistance loans last year from \$20,000 to \$40,000. They've been somewhat able to keep up slightly with the market to provide some benefit.

Uriah thanked Ashley and Rachel for the time and effort that they put into everything. He said that the amount of work and continuous communication with all these partners is impressive.

Finally, Ashley shared that every November, the City has a community needs meeting where they invite the public and service providers to come and discuss needs that they see within Gresham and East Multnomah County in the context of this HUD funding. They are going to do that virtually again this year on the evening of November 16th. Ashley will send out emails to the CDHS inviting everyone to come. Rachel compiles notes from the meeting and we do send those out, but Ashley thinks it helps to have CDHS members there to hear live what people have to say. Please look for emails with more information on that meeting. Councilor DiNucci chimed in to say that if you know of anyone that should come to that meeting, invite them. She also thanked everyone for this CDHS meeting and the nice presentation.

## **E. ADJORN**

Meeting Adjourned at 7:03 P.M.