



Angela D. Alsobrooks
County Executive

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

May 4, 2020

The Honorable Todd M. Turner
Chair
Prince George's County Council
County Administration Building
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

Dear Chair Turner:

Enclosed for the County Council's consideration is a Resolution for the purpose of amending the Prince George's County Fiscal Year ("FY") 2020 Annual Action Plan ("AAP") for Department of Housing and Community Development ("DHCD") by adding new Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") and Emergency Solutions Grants ("ESG") Program activities. These eligible activities were not originally funded or described in the FY 2020 Annual Action Plan, as modified on November 19, 2019.

As you know, the U.S. Congress recently enacted the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security ("CARES") Act, part of which attempts to address a wide variety of needs including providing shelter to homeless individuals, increasing affordable housing options, and maintaining crucial public services during the current public health outbreak through a formula grant allocation. As part of the effort, Congress designated funding to federal entitlement programs allocated through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD"). Specifically, Prince George's County is designated to receive funding totaling approximately (\$4,560,861) broken down into (\$3,036,958) in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and (\$1,523,903) for the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program.

In order to provide an immediate response to the rapidly evolving needs of County residents, HUD asserts that the grantees must amend their most recent Annual Action Plan as the addition of an activity not described in the plan constitutes a substantial amendment, pursuant to 24 CFR 91.505. Additionally, on March 31, 2020, HUD issued a notice indicating that given the need to expedite actions to respond to COVID-19, the statutory requirement to provide reasonable notice and opportunity for citizens to comment on substantial amendments concerning the proposed uses of CDBG, HOME, or ESG funds is waived. Specifically, HUD provided that grantees may reduce its comment period to no less than five (5) days on each substantial amendment, pursuant to 24 CFR 91.105(c)(2) and (k), 91.115(c)(2) and (i). Additionally, the requirement for in-person public hearings was also waived.

The Honorable Todd M. Turner
May 4, 2020
Page 2

This Resolution requires at least one (1) public hearing because the proposed amendment to the FY 2020 Annual Action Plan would constitute a “substantial change” under the FY 2016-2020 County Citizen Participation Plan, as described in the County’s FY 2016-2020 Consolidated Plan. However, pursuant to the above-referenced HUD waiver, an in-person public hearing is not required. Rather, HUD suggests that public hearing requirements may be met with use of a virtual public hearing if the following conditions are met: 1) national/local health authorities recommend social distancing and limiting public gatherings for public health reasons; and 2) virtual hearings provide reasonable notification and access for citizens in accordance with the grantee’s certifications, timely responses from local officials to all citizen questions and issues, and public access to all questions and responses.

The Council’s favorable consideration of this legislation is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact my office or Estella Alexander, Director, Department of Housing and Community Development, at 301-883-5535.

Sincerely,



Angela D. Alsobrooks
County Executive

Enclosures