

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORT

2024 Legislative Session

Reference No.: CR-024-2024

Draft No.: 1

Committee: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Date: 4/30/2024

Action: FAV

REPORT:

Committee Vote: Favorable, 8-0 (In favor: Chair Ivey, Council Members Dernoga, Fisher, Franklin, Vice Chair Harrison, Council Members Hawkins, Olson, Oriadha)

The Prince George's County Council convened as the Committee of the Whole (COW) on April 30, 2024, to consider CR-024-2024. On April 23, 2024, the County Council held a public hearing. On Tuesday, April 2, 2024, the County Council introduced CR-24-2023.

The Planning, Housing and Economic Development Director gave an overview of the resolution and the Policy Analysis submitted by the Office of Audits and Investigations. The County Executive transmitted this resolution for the Council's consideration to approve and adopt the Prince George's County Fiscal Year ("FY") 2025 Annual Action Plan ("AAP") for Housing and Community Development. The Annual Action Plan reflects the County's most critical housing and community development needs, identified in the FY 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan, as adopted by CR-047-2020. Additionally, the Annual Action Plan serves as the grant application for the following federal entitlement program funds: the Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") Program, the HOME Investment Partnerships ("HOME") Program, and the Emergency Solutions Grants ("ESG") Program.

Ms. Aspasia Xypolia, Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Director Aspasia Xypolia explained that the Action Plan is updated yearly according to the entitlement funds received from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Director Xypolia explained that the ten million, one hundred seventy-three thousand, five hundred twenty-five dollars (\$10,173,525.00) listed in the transmittal is based on the funding allocation awarded by HUD last year. DHCD still needs to receive the final funding allocations for this year. Staff will send a revised prorated adjustment when the funding is received.

Council Member Olson asked why the Neighborhood Design Center did not receive funding this year or last. He stated that several excellent nonprofit organizations facilitate economic development in Prince George's County communities, but the Neighborhood Design Center is top-notch.

Director Xypolia answered Council Member Olson's question by explaining that she volunteered for the organization in her previous career in 2006, 2007, and 2008 and has a lot of respect for the services that the Neighborhood Design Center provides. Next, she stated that the CDBG administrative regulations explicitly state what activities are eligible for CDBG funding. Ms. Xypolia explained that the types of projects that the Neighborhood Design Center has done in Prince George's County are not considered CDBG projects. She explained that the organization could receive funding from other funding sources. Lastly, she explained how the organization could work with another nonprofit organization, for example, on a streetscape project. The CDBG program provides funding for environmental reviews and compliance. Council Member Olson encouraged continued conversations with the Neighborhood Design Center to help the organization understand program requirements.

Chair Ivey asked how the Neighborhood Design Center received funding in the past. Ms. Xypolia explained that many years ago, there was an agreement to provide CDBG technical assistance. The organization's work has moved away from providing technical assistance. Director Xypolia met with the organization last year and explained how they could become eligible for CDBG funding. Lastly, she explained that the Neighborhood Design Center may need to revise its business model.

The Office of Audits and Investigations submitted a Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement dated April 29, 2024, indicating that the adoption of CR-024-2024 would offset revenues and expenditures for nine million, seven hundred twenty-seven thousand, two hundred seventy-nine dollars (\$9,727,279) in federal grant funds, specifically for CDBG, HOME, and ESG projects.

The indirect impact of the adoption of the resolution aligns with the Adopted General Plan, Plan 2035 Prince George's goals and will focus on initial goals set in place by the FY 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan to prioritize affordable housing and economic development, rental assistance, as well as homeowner's assistance.

After a robust discussion on a motion by Vice Chair Harrison, seconded by Council Member Fisher, the Committee voted 8-0 favorable on CR-024-2024.