

Department of Community Services CBAC

TO: Chair Deborah Kafoury and Board of County Commissioners (3) pages

FROM: Department of Community Services Community Budget Advisory Committee

DATE: April 20, 2021

SUBJECT: DCS Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The members of the Department of Community Services (DCS) CBAC appreciate the opportunity to support the county budget process. Following a comprehensive review of the Elections, Land Use Planning, Transportation, and Animal Services divisions' practices and emergent needs we identify three (3) funding priorities from the out-of-target program offers.

PROCESS

DCS staff arranged information sessions with the directors of each division. In clear and detailed presentations, directors explained both the rationales for their budget appeals and how each met demands of Covid-19 – new and expanded service needs, complicated communication, limited information, staffing shortages, and heightened concern for health and safety. The DCS CBAC then developed four (4) criteria for evaluating and prioritizing program offers:

1. Use State and Federal stimulus and disaster aid, and other funding and economic partners to increase current funding options and long-term stability.
2. Prioritize services that benefit the broadest array of community members while consistently employing an equity lens.
3. Support physical infrastructure of county operations to maintain a foundation for economic stimulus and recovery.
4. Provide all necessary means to protect the health, safety, employment, and benefits of all county employees as they work to maintain critical services.

EMERGING ISSUES & CHANGES

Our division director's presentations were detailed, enlightening, and informative. Our committee members expressed enthusiasm while offering good, pertinent suggestions. We learned much; our divisions earned high praise. Yet given the narrow restrictions of these

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reports few of the insights gained in this process will pass beyond our committee. Our practical input is limited to prioritizing three (3) one-time-only discretionary items (one of which presently is an annual IGA obligation). Thus, our contribution seems little more than a formality, merely highlighting the structural disadvantage of any new and therefore out-of-target ideas. More important, the merits of Multnomah County's many good works remain muted, out of general sight, obscured from the public precisely when community support is most needed for new income streams – bond measures, taxes, and fees, etc. Our CBACs should have means for advocacy as well as nominal approval, opportunities to play broader roles in activism, in showing off our divisions' achievements and innovations both within these reports and to the public at large.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our budget recommendations follow in priority order:

1. **90010B-22 Election Access & Education** \$104,325.

The county voters' pamphlet is Elections Division's most broadly accessible education and engagement tool, essential to their inclusion and equity efforts. It is mailed to every household and contains basic information about voter rights and procedures, printed in the county's six most commonly spoken languages. It is also an inexpensive outreach option for candidates who may not otherwise be able to afford a county-wide mailing. This program offer will restore funding for the voters' pamphlets for the November 2021 special election and the May 2022 primary election.

2. **90020B-22 LUP Code Compliance Staffing Restoration** \$184,068.

The Code Compliance program protects the environment and health and safety in unincorporated areas of Multnomah County by enforcing land use, transportation, solid waste, and grading and erosion control codes. Currently, one code-compliance officer serves the entire area, comprised of 23,000 residents and a current workload of more than 250 outstanding cases. FY2020 budget restrictions reduced compliance staffing from 2.0 to 1.0 FTE. Community feedback makes it clear that current service levels are inadequate, and more staffing is necessary to investigate and resolve code violations.

3. **90014-22 Levee Ready Columbia (IGA Obligation)** \$ 50,000.

As a regional partner in the Levee Ready Columbia program, Multnomah county funds work to secure the Columbia River levees by evaluating and addressing failures, deficiencies, flood risks, and noncompliance with the US Army Corps of Engineers Rehabilitation and Inspection Program. As a member of this program, Multnomah County supports work necessary to ensure improvements to the Columbia River levees that reduce the risk of catastrophic flooding and

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protect the health and resilience of County communities. Multnomah County continues to act as the fiscal agent in administering State grants and loans secured in 2016 for the regional partnership and provides representation in partnership meetings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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