



MINUTES
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT
AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING

MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2025

COMMUNITY MEETING CENTER
11300 STANFORD AVENUE
GARDEN GROVE, CA 92840

REGULAR SESSION - 6:30 P.M. – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

ROLL CALL: COMMISSIONERS de la O
COMMISSIONER JUNG
COMMISSIONER KESTER
COMMISSIONER PAREDES
COMMISSIONER PAYNE
COMMISSIONER RUBIN
COMMISSIONER TACKNEY

ALSO PRESENT: Monica Covarrubias, Sr. Project Manager; Timothy Throne, Project Manager; Dana Yang, Program Specialist; Svetlana Moure, Recording Secretary

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Timothy Throne

Staff welcomed returning and new commissioners to the commission and introduced the City staff.

A. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC: None

B. SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR: Commissioner Rubin moved to nominate Commissioner de la O for Chair. Commissioner de la O moved to second. The motion was carried by a 7 yes vote as follows:

Ayes: (7) de la O, Jung, Kester, Paredes, Payne, Rubin, Tackney
Noes: (0)
Absent: (0)

Commissioner de la O resumed the NICC chair, and assumed the meeting to select the vice chair.

Commissioner Rubin moved to nominate herself as the vice chair. Commissioner Tackney moved to second. The motion was carried by a 7 yes vote as follows:

Ayes: (7) de la O, Jung, Kester, Paredes, Payne, Rubin, Tackney
Noes: (0)
Absent: (0)

- C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Payne moved to receive and file the minutes from SEPTEMBER 9, 2024. Commissioner Kester moved to second. The motion was carried by a 7 yes vote as follows:

Ayes: (7) de la O, Jung, Kester, Paredes, Payne, Rubin, Tackney
Noes: (0)
Absent: (0)

- D. REVIEW OF CODE OF ETHICS/ BROWN ACT BY CITY ATTORNEY
The Review of Code of Ethics/Brown Act will continue after Item E1.

- E. MATTERS FROM STAFF: Commissioner de la O opened the meeting to Program Specialist Dana Yang.

1. PRESENTATION – HUD FUNDING OVERVIEW BY PROGRAM SPECIALIST, DANA YANG

Staff did a brief introduction and overview of our funding sources of our HUD Program. For our annual funds, we source from 3 different types of funding. Please note that all of these amounts are approximate and the actual dollar amounts will be release by HUD in early May. First, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) has been allocated \$1,820,000 for 2025. 100% of the CDBG funding goes to low and moderate income residents to help the community with programs such as the Home Repair Program, Meal on Wheels, Special Resource Team, as well as the MicroBiz Program.

Second is the Home Investment Partnership Act (HOME) funds, allocated approximately \$600,000. This also includes the Tenant Based Rental Program. Part of this funding gets carried-over from year to year so that it can go towards big infrastructure projects.

Finally, we have our Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and this is mainly used for homelessness services and for 2025 it is approximately \$157,000. This also goes to prevention, shelter, rehousing, outreach, and data collection.

There are also one-time award for federal funds. This funding is for one time use to address the impact of Covid-19, available to use until 2031. \$3,037,211 has been allocated towards HOME-ARP funding.

The citizen participation plan establishes policies and procedures to ensure citizen involvement in developing, amending, and reviewing the various community development plans.

The 5-year Consolidated Plan develops a 5-year strategy to address housing and community development needs. What goes into the Con Plan are the surveys, the community workshops, the stake holder meetings, public hearings and the public comment period.

Next we have the Annual Action Plan which outlines the projects, activities and priorities for the next fiscal year. This goes over the performance objectives and establishes the funding recommendations for each funding source. Each year, the Action Plan will be discussed at the March NICC meeting.

Lastly we have our Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) which goes over how we are doing with our goals, and what we have accomplished within that fiscal year and each year. The CAPER will be discussed at the September NICC Meeting.

Commissioner Payne asked, with all the projections of funding, do you anticipate any issues with them with the recent restructured budget cuts – do you have a plan for that?

Staff replied, at the moment everything is just projections and we will not be notified of our actual allocations until May.

Staff stated the 500 page Con Plan document has an APPENDIX E which shows the budgets for all 3 funding sources and it also has percentages related to those budgets, so we will adjust according to those percentages when we get the HUD allocations. The Con Plan has information in terms of how we're going to change that once the allocations are announced. It's just a matter of will it be less or more.

Commissioner Paredes asked, once the projections are in, is there a plan to reconvene to reassess those plans?

Staff replied, no, there is no plan to reconvene. If there is a large budget cut, looking at 50% or more, there is a potential to bring this to a special meeting and have it reconsidered. We do also have HUD carry over funds that carry over from one year to the next, so we do have some reserves that we would potentially program in if we did see a huge reduction of funding.

D. REVIEW OF CODE OF ETHICS/ BROWN ACT BY CITY ATTORNEY

We are going to address 2 topics. First is the Garden Grove Code of Ethics. That is found in Chapter 2.02 of the Garden Grove Municipal Code and that municipal code requires that all commissions review it annually. For your purposes, it says that if you have a substantial financial or personal interest in any item, matter, person, individual or business coming before this commission that you are acting on, that you have to disclose that to the public and then refrain from participating in the item. It covers both financial and personal interests. If you are financially vested in a decision that this commission makes or if you have a personal relationship with the subject matter or person of the subject matter of the decision arising from blood or marriage or close business relationship, that would constitute a conflict, that would cause you to have to disqualify yourself. The code also says that you are supposed to put your city's interest above your own personal interests when you are acting as a public official and you should not make a decision if you have a bias even beyond a financial bias – for instance if you have already made up your mind about something for some reason, you should not do that.

The code applies to you, City Council, all city employees, and other commissioners.

The Brown Act is the State's open meetings law, sometimes called the Sunshine Law.

It establishes the requirements that must be met for the majority of this body to meet at the same time and place to talk about the business that is within the jurisdiction of this commission.

It also retains requirements for giving public notice of these meetings as well as giving the public rights to come to your meetings and to participate in certain ways. The posting of the agenda comes out of the Brown Act. The public has to be given a 72 hour notice in advance of the meeting and the agenda has to be posted.

The definition of "meeting" is pretty broad. The definition of a meeting is, "a meeting occurs anytime a majority of the body meets at the same time and location to either hear, discuss, deliberate, or take action on any item that is within your subject matter jurisdiction." What the Brown Act says is that you cannot discuss this commissions business in private. It has to be at a meeting. It also prohibits what is referred to a "serial" meeting, that would occur -- the most common example would be when commissioner 1 texts commissioner 2 and then texts commissioner 3 then commissioner 4, so that 4 of you communicate, but not directly with each other. The law prohibits that.

There are a number of exceptions. One of them is to meet in closed session. You do not have to worry about that as only the City Council meets in closed sessions.

The Brown Act covers Meetings. It does not prevent any of you speaking with staff, individually speaking with the public, engaging in unilateral communications with less than the majority. Be aware that any time you put anything in writing though, it may get forwarded to others that you are not aware of.

In addition, all 7 of you can be at a city event, social gathering or meeting, and it is not a violation of the Brown Act if you are not talking about NICC business.

At a public meeting, if a topic is not listed on the agenda, you cannot talk about it. If the public asks about a topic and it is not on the agenda, you can briefly respond to the public, but you cannot engage in a discussion about it. It is not a Brown Act to respond to a question. To ask questions of staff for clarification is OK. If you want to make a brief report about your activities, commissioners have a right to do that. You can also provide staff with a reference to information and request that they report back -- "I discovered this, can you bring back a report on it next time."

Finally it gives the public various rights. The public can attend and they can even video the meetings if they want to. Any pieces of paper that are given to the commissioners, the public has the right to those same pieces of paper. They also have a right to participate in the meeting in the Oral Communications at the beginning of the meetings. Generally the public has the right to speak before you make any decisions on the issues.

E. MATTERS FROM STAFF: After Item D was presented, Commissioner de la O shifted the meeting back to Item E2.

2. PUBLIC HEARING – 2025 - 2030 CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND FY 2025-26 ACTION PLAN BY PROJECT MANAGER, TIMOTHY THRONE

- The purpose of the item before you is to conduct a Public Hearing regarding the 2025-2030 Consolidated Plan and FY 2025-26 Action Plan, as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

BACKGROUND

In 1995, HUD established the Consolidated Plan (Con Plan) as a long term planning document for state and local governments that receive annual grant funding from HUD. The Con Plan is intended to assist jurisdictions, assess their affordable housing and community development needs, analyze local market conditions, and help jurisdictions make data-informed funding decisions.

The consolidated planning process provides a framework for a community-wide dialogue that identifies housing and community development goals and priorities. The goals and priorities that are developed through the Con Plan guide our use of HUD funding over the next 5 years.

Submission of the Con Plan is a requirement for receiving annual federal funding through key programs, including the Community Development Block Grant, HOME, and Emergency Solutions Grants.

DISCUSSION

The Con Plan is a three-part document that consists of:

- 1) Housing and Community Development Needs Assessment:
Provides a profile of the community and its development needs through the presentation and analysis of local demographics, housing market and inventory conditions, and an inventory of existing affordable housing.
- 2) Five Year Strategic Plan:
The jurisdiction's available community development resources and identifies its Housing and Community Development goals and priorities for the upcoming five-year period.
- 3) Year-One Action Plan, which is for FY 2025-26:
Provides specific information describing the jurisdiction's proposed programs, projects, and activities designed to address the goals and priorities outlined in the jurisdiction's Con Plan.

Various methods of data collection were utilized in the preparation of the Con Plan, including:

- Surveying residents, program beneficiaries, agencies, service providers, non-profit organizations, housing developers, and City departments;
- Community workshops and stakeholder meetings; and
- Housing and demographic data.

The following is a brief outline of the Housing and Community Development goals and priorities that have been identified for the next five years:

1. Provide decent and affordable housing;
2. Address the needs of homeless individuals and those at risk of homelessness;
3. Provide community and supportive services;
4. Address public facilities and infrastructure needs;
5. Promote economic development employment opportunities; and
6. Provide for planning and administration activities to address housing and community development needs in the City.

FY 2025-26 ACTION PLAN

- Approximately \$2.9 million in HUD funds will be available during FY 2025-26.
- This budget includes approximately \$677,348 of previously unallocated HUD funds from prior year's entitlement allocations, and a new entitlement allocation of \$2.3 million in HUD funds. This is including a 3% projected decrease in HUD funds. We are anticipating some fluctuations and we anticipate at least a 3% decrease in the figures.
- Program and funding recommendations are based upon the input received during the public engagement period conducted during the preparation of the 2025-2030 Con Plan.
- During FY 2025-26, HUD funds will address a wide range of Garden Grove housing and community development needs, which includes the following activities:

1) *Public Services:*

- *Special Resource Team* – Special Resource Team funded at \$48,000 to assist 200 homeless individuals with essential services and referrals to emergency shelter.
- *Senior Center Services* – Senior Center funded \$155,000 to assist 500 seniors.
- *Meals on Wheels Program* – Fund Meals on Wheels Orange County \$20,000 to assist 140 seniors with home delivered and congregate meals.
- *Workforce Activation and Readiness Program (WARP)* – Fund StandUp for Kids \$50,000 to provide 18 transitional aged youth with workforce development assistance. Get them prepared for the workforce.

2) *Public Facilities and Infrastructure:*

- \$700,000 in CDBG funds is recommended for the Glen Street Rehabilitation Project and is projected to assist approximately 6,335 individuals.

3) *Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation:*

- \$160,000 in CDBG funds will be allocated to Habitat for Humanity of Orange County and Azure Development to complete 20 owner-occupied rehabilitation projects for single-family homeowners in Garden Grove.

4) *Economic Development:*

- *Boost Program* – Upwards is allocated \$130,000 to assist 16 childcare agencies in Garden Grove to build capacity and expand operations.
- *MicroBiz Program* – Grow America is allocated \$539,500, which includes \$250,000 in prior year resources and \$200,000 in revolving loan funds, which will be used to provide technical assistance to 40 Garden Grove micro-enterprises – business with 5 or fewer employees.

5) *Affordable Housing:*

- \$250,000 in HOME funds is recommended to continue tenant-based rental assistance for the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rental Transition (HEART) Program administered by Interval House.

6) *Emergency Solutions Grant:*

- The FY 2025-26 proposed funding levels and projections for each eligible ESG activity are as follows:
- *Street Outreach* - Fund Volunteers of America \$49,000 and StandUp for Kids \$20,000 to provide outreach and essential services to 55 homeless individuals.
- *Emergency Shelter* -Interval House funded at \$25,000 to provide 25 homeless individuals with shelter and essential services.
- *Rapid Rehousing* - StandUp for Kids funded at \$42,328 to assist 5 homeless households with rental assistance and essential services.
- *Homeless Prevention* - Fund StandUp for Kids \$31,700 to provide 3 at-risk households with rental assistance and essential services.
- *Homeless Management Information System* - Orange County United Way funded at \$5,256 to manage the County's Coordinated Entry System and Homeless Management Information System.

7) *Administration:*

- Approximately \$436,000 in CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds is recommended for staff and material costs for program management, project development and monitoring, public communication, HUD reporting, and financial administration.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact to the General Fund. The proposed FY 2025-26 Action Plan will allow the City to access approximately \$2.3 million in new entitlement grants from HUD, and \$677,348 in unexpended prior year funds. The allocation of HUD funds effectively leverages competitive grants and the City's General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission:

- Conduct a Public Hearing to receive comments concerning the 2025-2030 Consolidated Plan and FY 2025-26 Actual Plan; and
- Transmit the 2025-2030 Consolidated Plan and FY 2025-26 Action Plan to City Council for approval.

Commissioner Kester stated, it seems that there is more outsourcing this time around - like to another City.

Staff asked if the commissioner was referring to Orange County United Way. They are a new provider. They used to be 2-1-1 Orange County but they recently merged with United Way. United Way now manages the coordinated entry and homeless management information systems for any Garden Grove resident that

goes through that system, and every city usually puts up a certain percentage. We put up 3% of our total application.

Commissioner Tackney asked for more of an explanation about the MicroBiz program. It seems like a lot of funds are allocated to that.

Staff replied that the plan will help 40 unique businesses with technical assistance. Helping them develop their operations and to grow. Part of those funds, \$200,000 are going to be loans. There is a technical assistance component and a financial component to where if we underwrite on a specific business and see their need for financial capital to help them build/extend we can provide them up to a \$50,000 loan.

Commissioner Payne asked, on the page where you talk about the administration and \$436,000, is part of that allocated for staff and material costs?

Staff stated that some of that is for existing staff. We are actually looking to expand staff if we get approval through the budget process. That is all for administration and is ultimately allowed through CDBG, Home and ESG. There are certain percentages for each funding source that we are allowed to use for administration. CDBG is 20%, ESG is 7.5% and HOME is 10%. Those allocations used for staff salaries, material costs and the public noticing that goes into the development of these plans and cost for the newspaper to publish. There are costs that we recover through some of these administrative funds.

Commissioner Paredes stated that they heard about 2-1-1 and United Way. There is also the OC Navigator Program. What is the difference between them?

Staff responded that they were not familiar with the OC Navigator Program but would get back to the commissioner about that.

Commissioner Paredes replied, no problem. He read in the report about infrastructure when it comes to broadband and access to internet. Something I hear quite often is that the different types of services affect the various levels of speed and impact the community. For example DSL vs. fiber optics is a difference of night and day. Is that something that will be addressed later?

Staff stated that technically this is an eligible activity that we can consider through the Action Plan and the CAPER so it is something that can be looked into and if there is a need for development in that infrastructure it can be addressed.

Commissioner Paredes replied that someone mentioned satellite and that there is a way to be able to transmit yet there is a lot of concern about it, so if you are going to consider it, the fiber optics is probably more secure.

It was moved by Commissioner da la O to approve and seconded by Commissioner Payne to close the Public Hearing and to accept Staff's recommendation to transmit the 2025-2030 Consolidated Plan and FY 2025-26 Action Plan, along with any public

comments to City Council for adoption. The motion was carried by a 7 yes vote as follows:

Ayes: (7) de la O, Jung, Kester, Paredes, Payne, Rubin, Tackney
Noes: (0)
Absent: (0)

F. MATTERS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner de la O stated thank you to the staff and that he was looking forward to working with everyone.

Commissioner Paredes stated that in his line of work with non-profits, he is very concerned and anticipating a lot of cuts that may be coming our way. It is a very scary time for many of the organizations that we are supporting. We see there is funding that we are allocating to them and we do not know what is going to happen in the short term so that is why we are adamant about trying to figure out that if there is some word that comes down on the various funding that we are supporting and helping our homeless and housing situation. It is troublesome. It is about being socially responsible and making sure we take care of our residents. We need to come together and help out any way we can.

G. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm. The next Meeting of the Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Commission will be a Regular Meeting on **Monday, June 2, 2025**, at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chamber of the Community Meeting Center, 11300 Stanford Avenue, Garden Grove, CA.