

9/25 CED

**AGENDA ITEM #8: A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator To Restructure the Community Development Block Grant District Boards; and Rescinding Any Inconsistent Provisions Of Resolutions No. 76276 And 78102**

The CDBG Advisory Board for the 6<sup>th</sup> District would like to have entered into the record the following testimony as it relates to Agenda Item #8.

The President and Vice-President of the 6<sup>th</sup> District CDBG Advisory Board attended the September 2011 meeting and the recommendations presented at this meeting were previewed. At this meeting, we voiced our concerns, shared the same with the other members of the board, and would like to offer the following commentary as it relates to the restructuring recommendations being presented.

**RECOMMENDATION A** - Establishing a Citywide body with representatives of each District appointed by the Council members, with seven committees each assigned to address the needs and priorities of the respective District, and allowing individual District Boards to continue to function if the respective Councilmember so desired and was able to provide staffing for the Board in his/her respective District;

Both representatives from the District 6 CDBG advisory board adamantly oppose Recommendation A for the following reasons:

- (1) Citywide participation is diluted as the public participation at the meeting is "slim to none" as this model was in effect 2003.
- (2) Divide and conquer became a major practice in 2003 – The director of the agency presented the department's recommendations pertaining to usage of dollars for the economic development projects and the "majority" soon became the combined votes of representatives who represented districts that did not have significant low and moderate-income populations. The exchange for such support was a larger allocation of dollars to community-based projects that were located in Districts 1, 2 and 4 as the proposals which were submitted from the aforementioned areas professed to serve populations residing in Districts 3, 5, 6 and 7.
- (3) The 6<sup>th</sup> District Advisory board is well aware of the agency's staffing limitations. However, we do not believe that staff support should be provided by the Council member who may, or may not, be "trained" to carry out the functions of CDBG staff. In the public education arena, this would be called "supplanting." The agency is not the only entity that has had to "cut back" due to reduced revenue. The same has occurred to every city governmental entity, including council members.

**RECOMMENDATION B** - Drawing on the Oakland Community Action Partnership model of an advisory body with representatives from the seven Districts, the offices of elected officials and the County, and other public entities, which conducts needs assessment and allocates funding on a Citywide basis, and engages community residents funding recommendations and proposal review;

- (1) This recommendation assumes that "one size fits all" as well as dilutes the intent of "community participation." What is needed in District 6 may not be the service priority for District 3. In addition, many residents who voluntarily participation on the advisory boards are professionals who have access to community-based "opinion makers", as well as data/information needed to make informed, and intelligent decisions absent of the recommended governmental layers. In addition, to add elected officials and representatives from County and other public entities does not honor the spirit and intent of public participation.

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**RECOMMENDATION C** - Implementing a two-tier hybrid structure with a centralized body for the Districts with a smaller low- and moderate-income population, and retaining the independence of the Boards in Districts with a larger low- and moderate-income population;

The District Advisory Board is not "blind" to the impact of reduced funding. As such, we recognize that CDBG staff needed to take the roll, record the minutes insure that the body honors the Brown Act, etc. has diminished. As such, we would consider such a proposal. However, there must be additional assurances that the limitations pertaining to Recommendation A are addressed in a fair and transparent manner. Given the recommendations being presented, no such assurances are included. Thus, the 6<sup>th</sup> District Advisory Board does not support this recommendation.

**RECOMMENDATION D** - Retaining the existing seven District Board structure but reducing the number of times each meet during the year and for the sole purpose of reviewing funding proposals and Formulating recommendations;

This is a proposal that the District 6 Advisory Board could support as it meets at least the spirit of community participation in those matters concerning the reviewing of "funding proposals and formulating recommendations."

Having attended the September 2011 meeting, staff was honest in stating their assessment that not all boards exhibited the same level of participation. That participation by some bodies was limited to reviewing of "funding proposals and formulating recommendations." That once the funding decisions had been made, only those advisory boards serving Council Districts 5, 6 and 7 continued to meet as they had other community-based projects/activities that commanded their on-going attention. Under this recommendation, the advisory boards would retain their council district identify, meet and hear the proposals, as well as base their decisions on the impact that the proposed programs/activities seeking funding had upon the low and moderate-income residents residing in their particular locale.

**RECOMMENDATION E** - Re-establishing the Council of Seven CD District Chairperson as a vehicle to encourage participation in areas that are less involved.

This recommendation is not supported by the District 6 Advisory Board as it ignores the fact that not all of the CDBG advisory boards have a problem with community involvement. The re-establishment of the noted Council is a layer that is not needed by those council districts which are already involved and, therefore, presents a layer of meetings that is not needed.

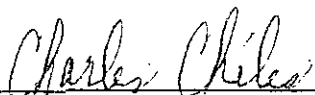
**RECOMMENDATION F** - Retaining the CD District Boards to provide citizen participation

While this is the ideal that the District 6 Advisory Board would support, we recognize the realities of receiving reduced funding that staff presented at the September 2011 meeting. In the absence thereof, the 6<sup>th</sup> District Advisory Board wants to go on record as supporting Recommendation F, but it also is open to supporting Recommendation D and E in that order.

5

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3