Legislation Text

File #: 18-0049 CRA, **Version:** 1

TO: **CRA Board of Commissioners**
FROM: **Elizabeth Burrows, Economic Development Manager**
THROUGH: **Jeff Costello, CRA Executive Director**
DATE: **July 16, 2018**

CRA WORKSHOP ITEM - CURB APPEAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Background:

In 2007, the CRA created the Curb Appeal Residential Improvement Program, to help facilitate exterior improvements to homes in The Set (CRA Sub-Areas 3, 4 and 8). The program currently offers grants of up to $15,000, funding limited exterior improvements including painting and pressure cleaning, landscaping and irrigation, driveway repair or replacement, mailboxes, roof repair or replacement, and house numbers.

The CRA has an interlocal agreement with the City, which administers the program through the Neighborhood Services Division of the Community Improvement Department. City staff is responsible for recruiting applicants, verifying eligibility, determining project scope and design, and obtaining construction bids for each project. CRA staff facilitates final approval from the CRA board, after which construction may begin. City staff manages project contracts, ensuring that all work is sufficiently completed, and then monitors improvements throughout the one-year warranty period.

Grants are available at two funding levels-100% for owner-occupied single-family homes with a household income at or below 100% of the area median income; and 50% matching grants for duplexes, non-owner-occupied single-family homes, and owner-occupied homes with a household income exceeding 100% of the area median income. Property owners are responsible for providing matching funds for grants approved at a 50% funding level.

Participation in the program has fluctuated over the years, with as many as eight (8) approved projects in a single fiscal year, and as few as none. At the recommendation of City staff, the CRA Board voted to modify the program in 2016 in response to community feedback. The maximum funding amount was increased by $5,000; roof repair and replacement were added as an eligible expense; and eligibility was expanded to offer matching grants to duplexes. Since then, interest in the program has generally increased, as evidenced by recently approved projects and active prospect files.

The CRA Board has often allocated dollars from the Curb Appeal Program to the City's annual "Rock the Block" event (formerly called "Curb Appeal by the Block"). The City event uses hundreds of volunteers and leverages funding from various sources to improve several income-qualified single-family homes within a single neighborhood over the course of one day. Considering both individual awards and "Rock the Block" events, the Curb Appeal program has been leveraged to improve a total of 68 homes in The Set, between FY 2008 and FY 2018.

City staff will present an overview of the program to the CRA Board during the July 16, 2018 workshop, to provide additional insight into the administration of the program, recruitment efforts, and other challenges and opportunities.

Attachments: Exhibit A - Curb Appeal Program Guidelines; Exhibit B - Annual Funding Analysis