



City of Rialto

Legislation Text

File #: 22-831, **Version:** 1

For City Council Meeting [September 13, 2022]

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

APPROVAL: Marcus Fuller, City Manager

FROM: Arron Brown, Deputy City Manager

Cynthia Alvarado, Parks, Recreation & Community Services Director

Lisette Montoya, Avant-Garde Inc.

Request that the City Council Approve Reprogramming Funding for the Rialto Cares Programs.

(ACTION)

BACKGROUND:

Rialto Assistance Program: On December 14, 2021, the Rialto City Council appropriated \$2,600,000 to be made available for residents who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The City allocated the funding as follows:

1. Rental/Mortgage/Utility Assistance Program - \$1,500,000 (\$5,300 per applicant);
2. Small Business Assistance Program - \$600,000 (\$10,000 per applicant);
3. Burial Reimbursement \$200,000 (\$5,000 per applicant); and
4. Childcare Reimbursement - \$150,000 for (\$1,500 per applicant).
5. Ambulance Support Services - \$150,000 (varies per applicant)

The City commissioned Avant-Garde to assist with the development of program guidelines, applications, outreach materials, and the overall implementation of the programs. Avant-Garde began accepting applications on January 14, 2022.

Table 1 below provides the funds expended to date.

Activity	Budget	Amount Expended	Remaining Balance
Rental/Mortgage/Utility Assistance	\$1,500,000	\$1,494,798	\$5,202
Small Business Assistance	\$600,000	\$564,000	\$36,000
Burial	\$200,000	\$11,500	\$188,500
Childcare	\$150,000	\$23,525	\$126,475
Ambulance Support Services	\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000
TOTAL	\$2,600,000	\$2,093,823	\$506,177

Table 2 below provides a summary of the applications:

	Received	Approved	In Review	Closed
Rental, Mortgage & Utilities	419	323	0	96*
Small Business	81	57	1	23**
Burial	6	3	2	1
Childcare	23	16	1	6
Ambulance Support Services	0	0	0	0

*Rental, Mortgage, & Utility applications were closed due to applicants already receiving assistance from another program (e.g., Housing is Key) or due to applicants residing outside a qualified census tract and unable to provide proper documentation of low-income status or COVID-19 impact.

**Small Business applications outside the qualified census tract were closed for not providing adequate documentation of COVID-19 economic impact.

ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION:

There is a current waiting list for residents seeking assistance for rental/mortgage/utility assistance and there continues to be a great need for this assistance. For Rental, Mortgage & Utilities there are 14 applicants on the waiting list with an additional 60 applications that have been submitted for Rialto Cares. There are another 55 applications on the waiting list for CDBG-CV Rental, Mortgage & Utilities program.

With the significant need for funding in the Rental/Mortgage/Utility Assistance, staff is recommending to reprogram funds allocated to other uses. Staff is requesting to have flexibility in the allocation of the funds to better serve Rialto Residents and the additional applications to be processed. Table 3 below provides a recommendation for reallocation of funds:

Activity	Budget	Budget Amendment	Revised Budget
Rental/Mortgage/Utility Assistance	\$1,500,000	\$345,000	\$1,845,000
Small Business Assistance	\$600,000	\$0	\$600,000
Burial	\$200,000	(\$150,000)	\$50,000
Childcare	\$150,000	(\$120,000)	\$30,000
Ambulance Support Services	\$150,000	(\$75,000)	\$75,000
TOTAL	\$2,600,000		\$2,600,000

Staff recommends reprogramming funding that had been initially identified for Covid funeral costs and ambulance billing in order to fulfill the present demand for residents needing assistance with Rental/Mortgage/Utility Assistance. Other sources that are available and have less stringent reimbursement requirements can be used to supplement the burial and ambulance support services to continue to meet the residents needs in those two areas. As an example, Fire Chief Brian Park has verified that FEMA is still covering the cost of funerals that are related to COVID-19. Further information is available at <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance>.

Additional Funding Sources

On March 9th of 2021, City Council established a COVID-19 contingency account that has been used for COVID-19 expenditures that were not planned in departmental budgets and other unforeseen, unbudgeted expenses in relation to the ongoing pandemic. There is currently \$662,432.92 remaining in that account. Although staff would not recommend allocating all funds in this account as there may still be unforeseen expenses, it provides a significant general fund source for City Council to provide additional assistance if that is the desire of City Council.

Table 4 below provides a recommendation for a recommendation of additional funds on top of the reallocation of funds discussed from Table 3. Reallocation of \$300,000 in contingency funds would assist more than 50 approved applicants.

Activity	Budget	Budget Amendment	Revised Budget
Rental/Mortgage/Utility Assistance	\$1,500,000	\$645,000	\$2,145,000
Small Business Assistance	\$600,000	\$0	\$600,000
Burial	\$200,000	(\$150,000)	\$50,000
Childcare	\$150,000	(\$120,000)	\$30,000
Ambulance Support Services	\$150,000	(\$75,000)	\$75,000
TOTAL	\$2,600,000		\$2,900,000

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

The request is not a “Project” as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Pursuant to Section 15378(a), a “Project” means the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. According to Section 15378(b), a Project does not include: (5) Organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

Complies with the following Rialto General Plan Guiding Principle:

Our government will lead by example, and will operate in an open, transparent, and responsive manner that meets the needs of the citizens and is a good place to do business.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney has reviewed and recommends approval of the staff report and guidelines.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Operating Budget Impact

Funds are currently budgeted and available for these programs.

Capital Improvement Budget Impact

No impact.

Licensing

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff Approve Reprogramming Funding for the Rialto Cares Programs