

To: Bob Harrison, City Manager

From: Joan Davenport, City of Yakima Community Development Director

Date: September 21, 2020

Subject: Recommended Response to Yakima County's Request for Staff Assistance with HOME Consortium

On August 26, 2020 the Mayor received a letter signed by the three members of the Board of Yakima County Commissioners in which the County asked for a discussion related to staff support of the Countywide HOME Consortium (see enclosed). City staff have evaluated the request and are issuing this report to the City Council.

This request from Yakima County was occasioned because the long term manager (a full time position) of the Yakima County HOME Consortium has left service from Yakima County, as well as one of the (full-time position) support staff. The program is severely under-staffed and yet has committed projects for 2020 and 2021. The City has successful and creative HOME and CDBG programs operated out of the Office of Neighborhood Development Services (ONDS). The nature of HUD monitored funds like HOME and CDBG are complex and highly regulated.

In order to provide an evaluation of the request, I asked the County Public Services Department Director, Lisa Freund for a Scope of Work, as the letter from the County Commissioners did not provide enough detail to determine the resources necessary to support their request. After a couple of preliminary discussions, the County submitted a preliminary draft Scope of Work (see enclosed).

Yakima County expects this would be a temporary position for approximately one year, while the seven cities and County develop a long term strategy for the future of the HOME Consortium. The staff assistance requested by Yakima County is estimated by the County to require 30 to 40 hours a week. Compensation for these services would be invoiced monthly based on hours worked. The County is down from 3 staff to 1 staff member. Considerable knowledge of the HOME program and restrictions is required to perform the tasks described in the Scope of Work.

The City of Yakima ONDS program has 6 full time staff, all funded under the Administrative provisions of the City of Yakima HUD Entitlement funds. The ONDS program operates with virtually no General Fund support, which is highly unique, and reflects a disciplined and lean organization. However, it is unlikely City resources can support both programs without additional administrative help.

Yakima County indicated they are considering a Request for Proposal (RFP) process for these needs and hopes the City will be one of the bidders. Alternately, the County may consider an InterLocal Agreement (ILA) with the City of Yakima, if desired.

Recommendation: If the City is interested in providing temporary staff support to the Yakima County HOME Consortium, my recommendation is to encourage Yakima County to issue an RFP. That process would allow the City of Yakima to assess their own staff resources and submit a proposal, if feasible.