

**FIRST 5
SACRAMENTO COMMISSION**

For the Agenda of: June 6, 2005

To: Commission Members

From: Lin Batten
Executive Director

Subject: Approval of Funding Recommendations for Community Building Initiative (CBI) Micro and Mini Grants

Contact: Linda Fong, 876-7386

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Approve funding recommendations for the First 5 Community Building Micro and Mini Grants (6) for a total of \$19,235.
2. Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute agreements, not to exceed the amounts listed below, with the following associations or their fiscal agents:

Central City Moms	\$1925
Meadowview Community Solutions	\$3000
Lets Sing Together	\$1185
Midtown Families for Fun	\$3125
Morrison Creek Estates	\$5000
Safe Routes to School – Natomas	\$5000

BACKGROUND:

On October 6, 2003 your Commission approved the Operational Plan for the Priority Result Area of Social Capital, which included creating the First 5 Neighborhoods Micro and Mini Grant Program. Your Commission approved Micro (50 grants per year, up to \$500 each) and Mini Grants (40 grants per year, up to \$5000 each) for a total of \$225,000 per year for three years.

These funds are allocated in the amount of \$56,250 per quarterly funding cycle. Funds not awarded in a funding cycle will be rolled over to the next cycle. There is a total of \$218,686.28 available in the current funding cycle for Micro and Mini Grants. In this funding cycle, six (6) Mini Grants could be awarded if the Commission chooses.

Under this plan, grant applications of \$2500 or less are reviewed by Commission staff and applications over \$2500 are reviewed by a review team consisting of one Advisory Committee member, two social capital content experts and one Commission staff.

DISCUSSION:

Commission staff manages the Community Building Initiative (CBI). In January 2004, the CBI Transition Team was formed to guide the implementation of the Operational Plan. The team functions under the direction of the Commission Executive Director and is advisory in nature. It is comprised of two Commission staff, former CBI Workgroup members, Advisory Committee members, Advisory Committee staff, and Commission consultants. The Transition Team is expected to sunset after the first round of Children's Action Grants.

At the September 23, 2004 Transition Team meeting, staff shared with the group that a pattern of common questions and mistakes have been seen in the applications. The group reviewed the application and provided suggestions for revisions. These comments and revisions have been incorporated into a new 2005 application. In addition, staff informed the Transition Team that many potential applicants have expressed confusion and concern about their eligibility to apply due to the term 'neighborhoods'. Staff and the Transition Team decided to revise the name of the application to the "First 5 Sacramento Community Building Micro and Mini Grants" to better reflect the intent of the funding and to connect to CBI.

On April 11, 12, 13, and 19, 2005, First 5 Community Building Application Workshops were held at four locations throughout Sacramento County in the daytime and evening. As a result, one (1) Micro Grant application and seventeen (17) Mini Grant applications were received by the deadline of May 4, 2005.

Each application was screened and scored by the review team according to a tool developed by the CBI Transition Team and Advisory Committee staff. Attachment 1 contains a list of applications recommended for funding as well as applications not scoring high enough to be recommended in this cycle. Attachment 2 contains a summary of the review scores, reviewer's comments, and funding recommendations from the review committee. Each applicant will be contacted and provided with technical assistance (TA). Those recommended for funding will receive TA from CBI, Center for Collaborative Planning, and Sacramento Enriches staff members for implementing their projects. Those not recommended will receive TA from CBI staff to improve the application to meet the funding guidelines. The applicant may choose to resubmit an application during the next funding cycle. CBI staff has reviewed the timeline for the year and has determined a regular schedule of quarterly due dates. Applications will be due by 5pm of the first Wednesday of February, May, August, and October. For 2005, the remaining application deadlines are: August 3 and October 5.

Review Process and Expected Outcomes:

The applications were screened based on the following minimum criteria:

- Program or event must benefit children ages 0 to 5 and their families in Sacramento County;
- Applicants must be comprised of at least three community members/parents planning the project and signing the application;
- Requested amount for Micro and Mini Grants is up to \$500 and \$5000, respectively, for a small community project.

Applications that met the minimum requirements were read, scored and ranked by the review team on the following criteria:

- Project results in increased “*social capital*” in a community;
- Proposal was driven at the local level by parents, families and community residents that wanted to organize to take action to improve their neighborhood for children ages 0 to 5;
- Community assets were mobilized;
- Evidence of involvement or a plan for involvement of other community members;
- Links to at least one First 5 Sacramento Commission goal for children ages 0 to 5 and their families;
- Ability to define success in producing increased social capital as evidenced by:
 - Reduced social isolation;
 - Increased trust;
 - Informed parents;
 - Greater advocacy skills;
 - Empowered parents, and
 - Stronger informal organizations
- Project will produce positive outcomes for children and families such as:
 - More helpful neighbors;
 - Effective parents advocates;
 - Safer physical environments;
 - Parents helping each other;
 - Healthy environments for child development;
 - Asset-oriented institutions;
 - Greater parent willingness to use resources; and
 - Increased neighborhood resources

Applications that scored at least 16 out of 24 points qualified for a telephone interview. Applicants were required to score at least 4 out of 6 points in the telephone interview in order to be recommended for funding. The following questions were asked:

1. Where did the idea for your project come from?
2. Who will be doing the work on the project?
3. Have you found an agency to act as your fiscal sponsor?
4. Open Item (Any question raised during the review team review of applications).

SUSTAINABILITY:

Applicants request funds for a variety of community driven activities and projects that last from one day to several months. Applicants are strongly encouraged to leverage other funds and in-kind resources whenever possible.

Grantees are encouraged to seek technical assistance and to attend networking and training opportunities offered by CBI staff and consultants. In addition, a Planning for Success meeting is held each quarter for the latest round of grantees. This meeting begins dialogue about community building and social capital in the grantees' projects, and ideas to sustain those efforts. Progress reports are required of the grantees, and provide just one way for grantees to illustrate how the connections in their communities are improving.

After their project is completed, some grantees may choose to request additional funds in the future for a larger expanded project or for an entirely new effort.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact of awarding the recommended funding for Mini Grants is \$19,235. The balance rolls over to the next cycle of funding in the amount of \$199,451.28 (\$218,686.28 - \$19,235). There will be \$255,701.28 (\$199,451.28 + \$56,250) available for Micro and Mini Grants in the next funding quarter.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

The following informal and formal associations will receive funding as a result of action on this item:

Central City Moms
Meadowview Community Solutions
Lets Sing Together
Midtown Families for Fun
Morrison Creek Estates
Safe Routes to School – Natomas

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends approving the First 5 Community Building Mini Grants (6).

Respectfully submitted,

Lin Batten
Executive Director

Attachments: First 5 Community Building Micro and Mini Grant Applications Funding Charts, Review Committee Summary, Resolutions

cc: Michele Bach, County Counsel
Susan Moody, Clerk of the Commission