



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – October 14, 2020 Agenda Item 7

Work Session

Check-In on COVID-19 Assistance to Residents and Businesses

Recommended Council Action

Report on staff progress implementing COVID-19 relief services funded by the COVID-19 Relief Fund.

Context with Key Issues

On May 13, the City Council voted to blunt the impact of the COVID-19 public health crisis in Takoma Park through the creation of a new COVID-19 Relief Fund totaling \$634,150. The purpose of the COVID-19 Relief Fund (CRF) is to provide financial assistance and support for City residents and small businesses. On June 10, Economic Development Manager Samira Cook Gaines and Housing Manager Grayce Wiggins presented a detailed spending plan to City Council that splits the CRF into five key service areas: direct financial support to businesses, housing subsidies for both renters and homeowners, protective COVID-19 equipment provision, technical advice and cost reimbursement for reopening businesses complying with new public health mandates, and workforce development services. On July 29th, they provided an update on their progress. The October 14th update will be the second Fiscal 2021 update on CRF service areas and use of funds.

Council Priority

A Livable Community for All: Identify Programming Needs in the Community

Environmental Considerations

There is no direct environmental impact from the City's COVID-19 relief initiatives.

Fiscal Considerations

The City of Takoma Park's COVID-19 Relief Fund is one-time funding obtained through savings approved by Council during the Fiscal 2021 budget reconciliation. The starting balance in the fund was \$634,150 from a Fiscal 2021 set-aside of \$440,000 and a Fiscal 2020 set-aside of \$194,150. \$55,500 of the Fiscal 2020 set-aside was spent in Fiscal 2020; the rest was carried over as a Fiscal 2021 appropriation. A breakdown of Fiscal 2021 spending to date will be provided during the October 14th COVID-19 Relief Fund update.

Racial Equity Considerations

Residents and business owners most impacted by the pandemic are disproportionately people of color. City staff have developed community and business engagement strategies that target the City's hardest-to-reach populations so that they are aware of the new services.

Attachments and Links

- [COVID-19 Resource Page](#) on the City's website summarizes City services for residents and businesses impacted by COVID-19.
- The [Racial Equity Initiative Page](#) on the City's website summarizes the City's methodology for ensuring that minority populations are among the beneficiaries of the new funding.
- The [Healthy Business Initiative Page](#) summarizes small business support related to adapting business operations to state and county public health reopening rules and guidance.