




Planning & Development Division
Planning & Economic Development Department

Room 160
411 West First Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

 218-730-5580

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Notes from April 30, 2020 Virtual Public Input Session for CARES Funds

The purpose of this session was to hear ideas from the public about the supplemental funding the City of Duluth was receiving due to the CARES Act. Specifically, the City will be receiving an additional \$1,427,448 in CDBG funds and \$719,669 in ESG funds with the purpose to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). The input from this session is going to be presented to the Community Development Committee on May 5 and the Duluth City Council on May 11 as part of the 2019 Action Plan update. Over 50 people attended this virtual session.


Specific comments regarding community needs included:


- Work with schools for programs for LMI families
- Kids programming, including phone/internet access, data access- currently the income division is increasing because not all families of all income levels have equal access
- Families are struggling paying rent
- Child care- the hours don't always correspond to worker's needs
- Child care- many workers cannot afford the service
- People need assistance during the gap, the time period before unemployment/stimulus payments get to them
- People suffering isolation- adults without internet access are becoming further isolated
- Culturally specific concerns with isolation and social support networks
- Business capital and investment is suffering for small businesses
- Need cultural specific outreach to reach different populations
- Health disparities are increasing
- Many people who work in the service industry need rental assistance and childcare assistance
- Service industry workers are disproportionately lower income and people of color, exacerbating disparities
- Steve O'Neil Apartments needs wifi
- School aged kids without internet can get paper packets, but lack the ability to interact with and get support from peers and teachers via technology
- Lake Superior Health Center has been receiving surge of patients, many people concerned about losing their health insurance
- NYS needs to expand hours to meet worker's needs, right now they operate for 4 hours, need to expand the hours they operate, such as 8 hours
- Not all students have equal access to technology at home



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- Food access to students/children/families is critical
- Children need mental health services
- Small businesses (5 people and less) and sole proprietors need assistance, a little capital goes a long way
- Self-employed individuals are struggling to qualify for unemployment or economic development grants
- Need to support emergency shelters- increase in demand
- Concern about people in the service industry
- Transportation is an issue, especially for those without personal vehicles or a driver's license
- Hillside neighborhood is undergoing changes-need to think about the families
- Need to help Lincoln Park businesses- keeping the community strong
- Need to think past the current COVID-19 phase and think about the next phase
- Need increased internet access- phone data plans are not sufficient
- Families need increased food access
- Need water for community gardens- used to be provided but may not be provided anymore
- Need technology access for adults and people with disabilities
- Need PPE masks, especially for people with compromised immune systems and their care givers
- Need PPE masks for LMI people and people experiencing homelessness and in shelters
- Domestic Abuses cases have increased, need more shelters/safe places
- Seeing more requests for assistance with tenants' rights
- Problems with family custody – what happens with COVID-19
- Need more emergency shelters
- More families are being impacted due to unexpected job loss/income loss
- Need more technical assistance for smaller agencies- help support smaller agencies that provide needed services in the community
- Need to track outcomes from these and other grants to see what the next phase will need
- People need help paying rent and mortgages
- Can funds be used to purchase a bunch of chrome books/phones/ipad to distribute to LMI families?
- Need mobile hygiene stations
- County/local orgs have a good plan for isolation and quarantine of individuals experiencing homelessness, but there's concern about how to help families who are currently unsheltered or experiencing homelessness
- Needs to consider the LMI college kids, non-traditional students
- Many low income and non-traditional students not qualifying for various CARES act funds