



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

April 7, 2021

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Garrett Toy, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Receive update on the Town's Residential Rental Assistance Program to assist extremely low-income renters whose household incomes were adversely affected by COVID-19

RECOMMENDATION

Receive update.

DISCUSSION

At its August 19th meeting, the Council approved the creation of a rental assistance program for residents and allocated \$60,000 for the program. The purpose of the program is to help residents in need whose household incomes are adversely impacted by COVID-19. The program is modeled after the County program, which was limited to extremely low-income households (i.e., earning 30% or less of median income adjusted for household size) and who were also at risk of homelessness. St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) and Ritter Center both volunteered to administer the program on behalf of the Town. For simplicity, the funding was split between SVdP and Ritter Center. The two non-profits coordinate their efforts to ensure there is no duplication of services to residents.

In December 2020, the Town Council received an update on the rental assistance program (Program) and requested that the Town allocate an additional \$30,000 to the Program. The Council ratified the allocation to the Program in January 2021.

To date, there have been 27 grants awarded under the program for a combined total of approximately \$47,000. The remaining balance in the program is approximately \$43,000. With the influx of millions of dollars in state/federal monies to the County for rental assistance programs and given the various state/federal program requirements, the non-profits indicated that they put the Fairfax program on hold in February 2021 to "sort out" all the issues. The current goal is to ensure the maximum use of the state/federal monies and to use the Fairfax funds to assist those households who are not eligible for any other rental assistance program. Staff believes this is an appropriate goal for the Program. Our understanding of the state/federal monies is "use or lose it" by a specific date.

It should be noted that there is a new process for applying for assistance. Specifically, the County has developed an on-line application for landlords and/or tenants to use to apply for assistance. The County will be sharing the program information with all the Marin communities so we can post on our websites and include in our newsletters.

Staff will provide another update to the Council after the details with the various state/federal requirements have been worked out and we have a better idea of the number of Fairfax residents that will still require assistance.

FISCAL IMPACT: n/a