



Administrative Services Committee Meeting

Meeting Date: 08/12/2025

HCD_Choice Neighborhood Early Action Activities (EAA) Funding Request

Department:	Augusta, Ga. Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department
Presenter:	Charles Jackson (HCD Director) and/or HCD Staff
Caption:	Motion to approve Housing and Community Development Department's (HCD's) request to provide funding to the Augusta Housing Authority, Augusta Locally Grown, Black Farm Street, and Greater Augusta Arts Council for the Choice Neighborhood Early Action Activities Grant within Allen Homes.
Background:	<p>Augusta's Choice Neighborhood (CN) Early Action Activities (EAA's) are designed to respond to issues brought forward by residents during the planning process with physical neighborhood improvements that demonstrate the commitment to change and help build momentum for the planning process.</p> <p>Food insecurity, specifically lack of access to fresh produce, was highlighted by residents of Allen Homes and the broader Choice Neighborhood as a major issue during the Needs Assessment process. Additionally, neighborhood beautification and placemaking initiatives were identified as necessary to address the issues of blight and social isolation that residents of Allen Homes expressed. Opportunities for youth residing in the neighborhood to engage in educational and recreational activities were also a top priority identified by residents that the EAA's seek to address. Augusta's CN Early Action Activities (EAAs) propose to install raised Garden Beds at the current Allen Homes neighborhood, the targeted distressed housing site of Augusta's Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan.</p> <p>Additionally, Augusta's CN EAAs will incorporate the creation of outdoor gathering space through the introduction of a sunshade structure and benches to allow space for youth programming and neighborhood activities. While the current Allen Homes site is not under consideration for the development of new housing in the Choice Neighborhood, there is a need to create impact in a way that meets residents where they are as the planning and development</p>

process for replacement housing moves forward. With these CN EAA installations, the current Allen Homes site will experience improvements that create a vibrant and welcoming asset within Augusta's Choice Neighborhood project area for the targeted residents to enjoy increased quality of life.

In addition to the Choice Neighborhood garden beds, Augusta's CN EAAs would also include the following:

- Public art installation, in partnership with the Greater Augusta Arts Council.
- Installation of sunshade structure and benches to provide additional community space for residents.
- Installation of Wi-Fi repeaters to expand internet access to residents in the community.
- Revitalization of existing basketball court with new paint and hardware.
- Installation of a Little Free Library to facilitate book lending and to serve as an information distribution point for the CN Project to engage with community members and garner feedback from residents.

Analysis:

Approval of the MOUs will allow the partnerships for the Choice Neighborhood Grant to begin.

Financial Impact:

HCD will utilize Choice Neighborhood grant funds
Contract amount: \$125,000.00

Alternatives:

Do not approve HCD's Request.

Recommendation:

Motion to approve Housing and Community Development Department's (HCD's) request to provide funding to the Augusta Locally Grown, Black Farm Street, and Greater Augusta Arts Council for the Choice Neighborhood Early Action Activities Grant.

Funds are available in the following accounts:

Choice Neighborhood grant funds:
221073211/5211119 - \$10,000
\$5,000 for FY2025
\$5,000 for FY 2026

REVIEWED AND
APPROVED BY:

Procurement

Finance

Law

Administrator

Clerk of Commission