



CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: February 15, 2024

From: Caroline Cheung, Assistant to the City Manager

Subject: Brisbane Rental Assistance Program Eligibility Requirements

Community Goal/Result

Safe Community - Residents and visitors will experience a sense of safety

Economic Development - Brisbane will work with the businesses and residents to provide for economic vitality/diversity

Purpose

To support lower-income Brisbane residents who are facing financial hardships.

Recommendation

Revise the eligibility requirements for Brisbane's Rental Assistance Program to reach more people (ideally to anyone in Brisbane experiencing financial hardship impacting the person's ability to stay housed).

Background

At the December 10, 2020 City Council Meeting, staff was directed to set up a rental assistance fund in the amount of \$100,000 from the City's Low-Moderate Housing Fund, to be used to assist Brisbane residents who have missed rental payments due to COVID-19-related issues. The program has been administered by Samaritan House, with Brisbane's Core Service Agency, the YMCA Community Resource Center, processing the applications. The current eligibility criteria for the program are:

Eligibility

- Live in Brisbane
- Income at 80% or lower of Annual Median Income based on the previous year's tax return (Family of 4 = \$175,000 as determined by State of California Department of Housing and Community Development – effective June 6, 2023)
- Not related to Landlord
- Have a signed rental agreement
- Was current with rent as of March 16, 2020 (no pending evictions)
- Have accumulated past-due rent
- Not receiving other COVID-19 related rental assistance
- Savings not available to cover past-due rent
- Show impact of COVID-19 on Income
 - Notification of job loss/termination during pandemic

- Notification of furlough during pandemic
- Notification or employer-signed form confirming reduction in hours
- Application for or approval of Unemployment Insurance benefits
- Notarized affidavit signed that includes the name of the household member who is self-employed, the name and nature of the business, and narrative confirming economic impact on self-employment during pandemic

Discussion

Since the inception of Brisbane's Rental Assistance Program in late 2020, a dozen households have been assisted by the program. After last year's winter storms, where a Brisbane resident's home was red-tagged when a mudslide ran through her living room, the City Manager's Office reached out to the YMCA Community Resource Center to expand the use of the funds for emergency/disaster storm-related hardships. That resident has since received one year's worth of rent through the program (\$13,250). To date, \$49,895.66 remains in the fund to be distributed.

The Director of the YMCA Community Resource Center, Elida Sobalvarro, reached out to the City Manager's Office to say that they have more families that are a bit removed from the direct financial impact of Covid itself, but are still recovering from the financial impacts of Covid and/or are dealing with the general impacts of Covid on the economy and regular financial hardships. She inquired whether the section referring to the impact of COVID-19 on the resident's income could be removed as part of the eligibility requirements so that the program would be able to be utilized by more residents (ideally anyone experiencing a financial hardship that is impacting the person's ability to stay housed).

On January 29th, the Economic Development Subcommittee met to review this request and were in agreement to revise the program's eligibility requirements; the Subcommittee also recommended staff bring the revised program to the full City Council before the eligibility requirements were revised and the remaining funds in the Brisbane Rental Assistance Program distributed fairly.

As revised the program's eligibility would be:

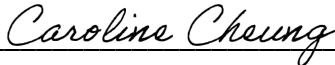
- Live in Brisbane
- Income at 80% or lower of Annual Median Income based on the previous year's tax return (Family of 4 = \$175,000 as determined by State of California Department of Housing and Community Development – effective June 6, 2023)
- Not related to Landlord
- Have a signed rental agreement
- Savings not available to cover past-due rent

Fiscal Impact

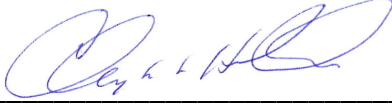
None, as the \$100,000 from the Low-Moderate Housing Fund and \$12,000 from the General Fund for the cost of administering the program through Samaritan House have already been allocated. As mentioned, \$49,857 remain available.

Measure of Success

Additional Brisbane households would be helped through the City’s Rental Assistance Program.



Caroline Cheung, Asst. to the City Manager



Clay Holstine, Interim City Manager