



City Council Report

Date: April 15, 2024
To: City Council
Through: Scott J. Butler, Assistant City Manager
From: Sharon Skinner, Grants Coordinator
Subject: Resolution of support for the submittal of a grant application by City of Mesa Community Services Department to the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation in the amount of \$90,620 for Alston House at Washington Escobedo operations and maintenance and approving the City Manager to accept and administer subsequent awarded funds.

Purpose and Recommendation

This request is seeking a City Council resolution of support for City of Mesa Community Services Department's application to Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation for Proposition 202 funding. If awarded, the grant will provide \$90,620 for Alston House at Washington Escobedo operations and maintenance. A Council Resolution supports this effort to secure a grant and commits the city to receive it on behalf of the department and pass it through in its entirety to them if awarded. As these programs serve the needs of City of Mesa residents, staff recommendation is for Council to adopt this resolution.

Background

The Community Services Department is seeking one-time costs and funds to support the preservation, operations, and maintenance of the Alston House community facility at 453 N Pima St in Mesa, AZ. The City of Mesa owns the Alston House, which was built in 1922. It was home to Dr. Lucius Alston, the first African American doctor to serve the residents of the then-segregated Washington Park and Escobedo neighborhoods.

Since 2017, the City of Mesa has strived to keep the property available for the community due to its historical significance. Neighborhood organizations hold board meetings and gatherings. The Alston House is a key part of the neighborhood's identity and heritage and a testimony of growth and historical significance for Mesa. The Alston House needs repair, including a new roof, and a need for dedicated funds to support the level of care and maintenance this historical building requires. Our department also seeks assistance to adequately fund Alston House's maintenance and operations. The Washington Escobedo neighborhood has a total of 678 households. This community would greatly benefit from Alston House's improvements and availability to hold neighborhood meetings and community-building events in this space. The House is

located within a 2-mile radius of 14 K-12 schools and one ASU College School. These schools could use the space to conduct small graduation ceremonies, presentations, and historical educational experiences. For example, Step-Up Schools, a charter school in the neighborhood, holds its Kindergarten Graduation ceremony at the Alston House's courtyard every year.

This request for Alston House aligns with the priorities and objectives outlined in the department's Annual Work Plan.

This proposal also falls under the Neighborhoods and Placemaking Council Priority: "Mesa's neighborhoods and community spaces are well-connected, clean, safe and welcoming. They are economically and socially dynamic places, are culturally vibrant and attractive, and are served by quality infrastructure."

This Alston House project is expected to serve 180,000 local residents.

Discussion

A resolution of support for this grant request will complete the necessary documentation for the organization to file their application by the funder's deadline and be considered for funding from Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. Mesa's participation in Proposition 202 Indian Gaming Grants has returned over \$1 billion to Arizona communities since its passage in 2002 from four surrounding tribal governments.

Alternatives

The only alternative to adopting this resolution would be to not adopt. Such an action would deny Mesa sponsorship for this request and require the organization to seek an alternate local government for access to this funding source.

Fiscal Impact

The fiscal impact on the City of Mesa, should this grant be awarded, will be negligible except overhead expenses in accounting to accept and reissue the grant check. The City does not administer the grant and signs an MOU or IGA with each tribe to limit our liability to only the pass-through transaction.