



Date: February 6, 2008

To: Patrick W. Baker, City Manager

Through: Wanda S. Page, Deputy City Manager

From: Rhonda Parker, Director Durham Parks and Recreation

Subject: Approval of the Grant Award for Project M.O.R.E. – a gang prevention and intervention initiative for target areas in NE Central and SW Central Durham

Executive Summary

The City of Durham Parks and Recreation Department (DPR) has been awarded a grant in an amount not to exceed \$46,135 from the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice Prevention through the Durham County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC). The program is called Project M.O.R.E. (Maximized Outreach for Redirection and Enrichment). Project M.O.R.E. has been designed to help 35 teens aged 14 – 17 avoid and/or stop engaging in gang activity. Funds would be used to pay the salary of a Community Outreach Worker that would target youth at risk of engaging in gang activity and connect them with appropriate services in the community.

Recommendation

The Administration recommends that the City Council adopt the Durham County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council grant project ordinance and give authorization to execute the grant agreement in the amount of \$46,135.

Background

The Parks and Recreation Department has made the abatement of teen gang activity one of its priorities and seeks to provide enriching programs for teens that will help them avoid negative behaviors, including gang affiliations and activity. Recognizing the abundance of teen crime, gang activity and delinquent behavior that occur in NE Central and SW Central Durham, DPR responded to a Request for Proposals from the JCPC in May 2006. DPR and the John Avery Boys & Girls' Club were the two agencies funded and both agencies have become part of a larger county-wide Gang Prevention Strategy that involves many public and private agencies throughout the County. This is the second and final year of funding for this project.

The Community Outreach Worker for Project M.O.R.E. was hired in March 2007. She works in conjunction with the Street Outreach Workers employed by John Avery Boys' and Girls' Club and the Durham Police Department Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. The three individuals are part of a Gang Prevention and Intervention Team comprised of front-line staff from law enforcement, Durham Public Schools, social service agencies, mental health providers and other youth development agencies. The Outreach workers identify youth in need of services and work with the team to redirect youth into positive activities at DPR facilities, the John Avery Boys' and Girls' Club, the Durham Public Schools and others. The group works to connect the youth and their families to other necessary services that may not be directly related to gang-activity but may be risk factors. Such connections may include

those with mental health providers or the Job Link system. The DPR Community Outreach Worker is specifically responsible for preventing 27 youth from joining gangs and redirecting 8 youth that are currently involved. The Outreach Worker refers youth to DPR and other programs in the community and connects them with appropriate social services through the Gang Intervention Team.

The job description and scope of work for the Community Outreach Worker are taken from the Comprehensive Gang Prevention Model recommended by the United States Department of Juvenile Justice based upon their review of initiatives nationwide. Successful programs using Street Outreach Workers currently operate in Boston, Pittsburgh and Houston. The individual hired is a person possessing a familiarity with gang issues and/or teen gang activity in Durham neighborhoods, and is also able to communicate effectively and work well with Intervention Team members and other community entities. The position is a temporary position with benefits through June 30, 2008.

Issues/Analysis

This is a continuation of a program that began in October 2006. The program is currently operating. This grant is non-renewable after this fiscal year. The contract for this grant was issued in May 2007, however an award letter was not received at that time.

Alternatives

The alternative of rejecting the funds would make the implementation of Project M.O.R.E. difficult since the \$46,135 grant is necessary to pay the cost of the salary and benefits of an individual whose position has not been budgeted. Another implication is that the ability of the City to receive funds from the JCPC and from the NC Department of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention in the future is almost certain to be negatively impacted.

Financial Impact

The \$46,135 in JCPC funds is being matched by \$9,909 in DPR funding budgeted for salaries and fringe benefits of recreation and maintenance staff that will support the program that complement the Community Outreach Worker position, as well as the value of space where the position will be housed. All of the match is in-kind (the employees and space are currently in place) and no additional funds will be needed for matching purposes.

SDBE Summary

There are no SDBE implications associated with Project M.O.R.E.