



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Sara L. Hensley

**SUBJECT: GRANT PROCESSES FOR
COMMUNITY-BASED
ORGANIZATIONS**

DATE: 05-09-05

Approved /s/ Date 05/23/05

REASON FOR MANAGER'S BUDGET ADDENDUM

This memorandum is in response to the direction that the “City Manager continue to streamline the grant process for community-based organizations in order to reduce the amount of CBO time required for their administration and increase their time for providing valuable services to San José residents.”

BACKGROUND

In the past year, the Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services Department's (PRNS) Grants Unit underwent a reorganization effort. This reorganization effort included the addition of the San José After School Program (SJAS) to the existing complement of Grants Unit programs (i.e., Community Development Block Grant [CDBG], Healthy Neighborhoods Venture Fund [HNVF], Bring Everyone's Strengths Together [BEST], and Community Action and Pride grants [CAP]).

In the process of the reorganization effort, staff also began looking at improving the grants processes with a particular focus on better customer service to agencies.

ANALYSIS

In the past year, PRNS has attempted to improve the following: communication, monitoring, applications, the grants processes themselves (depending on advisory committee recommendations), policies and procedures, and reimbursements. These aspects of grants administration continue to be a work-in-progress. As staff gains additional and new experience with the refined processes and the agencies provide feedback about them, PRNS will continue to work toward a more efficient model for doing business.

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While much of the documentation for CDBG is driven by federal requirements, in 2005-2006, staff will continue its effort to reduce the amount of time agencies spend on applying for and administering City grant funds. This continued effort will include additional review of the application formats to simplify them further and research regarding how the City's grants system may be automated like the Santa Clara County's Social Services Agency. In doing so, staff will work towards a goal of decreasing the amount of hard-copy paperwork required and decreasing turnaround time necessary for City processing.

A simplified application format and automation will be significant improvements to pursue in 2005-2006. The City will be one step further along in a continuous effort toward better customer service related to its grants processes.

/s/

SARA L. HENSLEY
Director of Parks, Recreation
and Neighborhood Services