



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, February 28, 2023

Council Session

Item H-2

Consideration of Approving Grant Application to ICMA/Gates Foundation for Economic Mobility Opportunities

Staff Contact: Laura McAloon

Council Agenda Memo

From: Laura D. McAloon, Interim City Administrator/City Attorney

Meeting: February 28, 2023

Subject: Grant Application to ICMA/Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Presenter(s): Laura McAloon, Interim City Administrator/City Attorney

Background

On February 1, the International City Managers Association (ICMA) announced a partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to provide up to \$30,000 in grant funding to ten selected cities regionally distributed across the United States. The grant program is called the Economic Mobility and Opportunity (EMO) Cohort and Grant. ICMA describes the Grant as an opportunity for ICMA members “to receive training, technical assistance, and funding to inform policies and effect conditions that promote overall well-being and upward mobility for their residents.” Both the Finance Director and City Attorney are members of ICMA, which enables the City to apply for the grant funding.

The Grant will provide up to \$30,000 in funding to each regional cohort that will be used for the implementation of an economic mobility assessment, planning, or a public engagement process. The three person cohort teams must include the City’s chief administrative officer or assistant chief administrative officer and two other members from staff or the community. At least one of the three must be an ICMA member.

Further information about the EMO Cohort and Grant opportunity can be found in the attached informational sheet from ICMA.

Discussion

City Administration staff have reviewed the EMO Cohort and Grant opportunity and recommend that the City apply. The timeline for application, award and implementation is quick and ambitious, however we believe that Grand Island and its residents would benefit greatly from the opportunity if we are successful in the application. Grant applications are due on March 1 with notice of award issued on March 15. If selected, a 3 person cohort from the City would begin to participate in monthly virtual meetings with the 9 other regional cohorts and facilitated by ICMA and the Gates Foundation in April. In addition, all of the regional cohorts would attend an in-person national cohort meeting funded in full by ICMA and the Gates Foundation in addition to the \$30,000 grant

funding. A second in-person national cohort meeting will be scheduled in the late summer/early fall as the work of the grant recipients is wrapped up and put into final form.

Staff have met to discuss themes and planning options that would support a successful application. Common themes developed as we discussed ideas that could generate upward economic mobility for City residents. Those included expanded workforce training and upskilling options, local educational opportunities that enhance job skills and increase earning opportunities, public transportation to provide residents with the means of accessing education and training centers and employment, and providing local programs for job training and education to high school and college age residents that will enable them to remain in Grand Island and earn incomes that will assist themselves and their families in overcoming intergenerational poverty.

We recognize that the creation of such opportunities in the City will require strong partnerships with the high schools, the Community College and employers, so we have reached out to Grand Island Public Schools and the Grand Island Community College to determine interest in participating in the Grant application. Each have agreed to participate in the City's cohort and each will designate a representative to be a team member who has committed to active participation and attendance at all of the cohort meetings. We believe this level of regional cooperation in the creation of a plan to facilitate upward economic mobility for our residents will make our grant application a strong contender for award, and ultimately success in the endeavor. Per the terms of the Grant, the City's cohort representative will be the Interim City Administrator, who also satisfies the requirement for one ICMA member on the cohort.

Alternatives

It appears that the Council has the following alternatives concerning the issue at hand. The Council may:

1. Approve the submittal of a grant application.
2. Take no action.

Sample Motion

Move to authorize City staff to submit an application for the ICMA/Gates Foundation Economic Mobility Opportunity Cohort and Grant.

ICMA Economic Mobility and Opportunity Cohort and Grant

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

ICMA's Economic Mobility and Opportunity (EMO) Cohort is a unique and rare networking opportunity for ICMA members to receive training, technical assistance, and funding to inform policies and effect conditions that promote overall well-being and upward mobility for their residents. This opportunity is made possible with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The goals of this opportunity are to 1) increase local decision-makers' understanding of drivers of and barriers to mobility and opportunity and 2) support local leaders in identifying and implementing actions to advance upward mobility for residents of their communities.

ICMA is looking for up to 10 local governments to learn from one another and subject matter experts, and to learn about practical tools and resources to apply within their community. The selected local governments will receive a grant of \$30,000 for the implementation of an economic mobility assessment, planning, or engagement process as part of their participation in the cohort. Participating local governments will have access to additional virtual and/or in-person technical assistance support covered by ICMA with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Cohort activities are anticipated to occur between April – October 2023.

ELIGIBILITY

- Applications must be submitted by U.S. local government entities and identify a team of three participating representatives.
- Teams must include the local government's chief administrative officer (CAO) or assistant chief administrative officer (ACAO). Other project team members may include additional staff, elected officials, chamber members, representatives of other community partners, etc.
- Teams must include at least one ICMA member.

IDEAL TEAM MEMBERS

- Community leaders who are committed to improving economic outcomes for residents.
- Interested in exploring a wide range of themes related to economic mobility such as housing, workforce, education and addressing intergenerational poverty.
- Willing and enthusiastic participants in discussion and learning opportunities.

PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

- Attendance of all participants at two in-person events, with travel costs for three (3) participants per local government covered by ICMA with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The first event is expected take place in late April/early May.
- Team participation in monthly virtual cohort calls of up to 90 minutes each.
- Submission of a scope of work and budget for use of grant funds, with funding awarded following approval from ICMA.
- Fulfillment all reporting and evaluation requests from ICMA staff and funder by stated deadlines.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for the cohort, submit an application via the [online form](#) (also accessible via icma.org/emo) by 5:00 pm EST on March 1, 2023. Application questions are provided for reference in this document beginning on the following page.

Once an application has been created and submitted, you may continue to update your submission until the application closes at 5:00 pm EST on Wednesday, March 1, 2023. Instructions on how to access and update your initial submission will be emailed to the primary contact identified in your application.

SELECTION PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed to create a well-rounded cohort representing geographic, demographic, economic, and level of experience diversity across the participating local governments. Additional evaluation criteria include:

- Strength of participation team/staff capacity
- Projected impact of participation
- Demonstrated commitment to improving economic mobility and opportunity for their residents.

ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

- February 2, 2023: Application opens
- February 15, 2023: Information and Q&A session via Zoom
- March 1, 2023 (5:00 pm EST): Application closes
- March 15, 2023: Selected local governments notified (subject to change)
- April 2023: Cohort orientation virtual meeting
- Late April/early May: In-person cohort meeting
- April – October: Ongoing technical assistance and learning opportunities; monthly virtual calls
- Late summer/early fall: Second in-person cohort meeting