

Legislation Text

File #: 15-18417, Version: 1

The Umbrella Center

Action:

- A. Approve the Safe Communities Committee’s recommendation to allocate \$5,000,000 for the establishment of The Umbrella Center, and**
- B. Authorize the City Manager or his designee to negotiate and execute any necessary contracts and agreements for allocation of \$5,000,000 for the establishment of The Umbrella Center from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund provided by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, contingent upon the Umbrella Center raising additional financial support by September 2024, including:**
- \$10,000,000 from Mecklenburg County, and
 - \$20,000,000 from private-sector contributions.

Committee Chair:

Larken Egleston, Safe Communities Committee

Staff Resource(s):

Shawn Heath, Housing and Neighborhood Services

Explanation

- The Umbrella Center (Center) is a proposed Family Justice Center, a nationally recognized best practice model for the delivery of services to victims of inter-personal violence.
- The Center will provide a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary co-located service center following a national victim-centered, trauma-informed model in which agencies and organizations that assist victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, elder and dependent adult abuse, human trafficking, and child abuse, such as the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department’s Special Victims Unit, are able to work in collaboration with each other, and where victims and their children can seamlessly access the services they need.
- The Center is proposed to be located on approximately 2.9 acres located at 4822 Albemarle Road (parcel identification number 133-011-45) in Council District 5. Additionally, the Center is exploring opportunities for satellite locations in one northern town and one southern town in Mecklenburg County.
- The city’s \$5,000,000 funding allocation will be released contingent upon the Center’s successful completion of all other fundraising necessary to establish the Center by no later than September of 2024, including:
 - \$10,000,000 from Mecklenburg County, and
 - \$20,000,000 from private-sector contributions.

Background

- On March 11, 2021, in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), which included the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF). Charlotte was one of almost 1,000 cities across the nation that received SLFRF funds. SLFRF funds may only be used to cover eligible costs obligated by December 31, 2024.
- SLFRF support of the Center as proposed by this action has been reviewed for compliance with the

U.S. Treasury Department's Final Rule regulating allowable uses of SLFRF funds.

- On August 3, 2022, the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners approved \$10,000,000 in funding toward the establishment of the Center, including the acquisition costs for the 4822 Albemarle Road property.

Committee Discussion

- On February 1, 2021, Mayor Lyles referred a request for support from Safe Alliance and other service providers to collaborate with the County in the establishment of a Family Justice Center (The Umbrella Center) to the Safe Communities Committee (Committee).
- On February 2, 2021, the Committee received a presentation from the Family Justice Center Steering Committee. The proposed funding model to establish the Center included \$10,000,000 from the city, \$10,000,000 from Mecklenburg County, and \$15,000,000 in fundraising from private donations. On May 20, 2021, the proposed funding model was changed to \$5,000,000 from the city, \$10,000,000 from Mecklenburg County, and \$20,000,000 in fundraising from private donations.
- On May 4, 2021, the Committee received a report from the Strategy and Budget Department recommending continued collaboration with Mecklenburg County, whose core services most closely align with the proposed Center's services, in exploring the creation of a Family Justice Center. The Committee also discussed the Center at their June 1, 2021 meeting.
- On February 1, 2022, the Committee voted unanimously (Council members Egleston, Phipps, Bokhari, Johnson, and Newton) to recommend that City Council allocate \$5,000,000 for the establishment of the Center. The Committee Chair reported this to the City Council at the March 1, 2022 Council Strategy Session.

Fiscal Note

Funding: ARPA funds