

Policy Briefing Summary

City Council



Regarding:	Public Hearing for a Proposed CDBG-Funded Activity, the 2026 IX Arts Foundation Accessibility Enhancements Planning Grant, a Substantial Amendment to the Program Year 2026-27 Annual Action Plan in the Approximate Amount of \$25,000.00 (1 of 2 readings)
Staff Contact(s):	Anthony Warn, Grants Analyst, Taylor Harvey-Ryan, Grants Program Manager
Presenter:	Anthony Warn, Grants Analyst
Date of Proposed Action:	September 8, 2026

Issue

The IX Arts Foundation (IAF) is the primary steward of outdoor space located just south of the city's historic Downtown Mall and adjacent to two newly redeveloped publicly supported housing developments, Kindlewood and Crescent Halls. IAF manages this space as the host site for multiple popular community activities, including a popular weekly Farmer's Market, community concerts and events, and a public playspace, among others. While the space IAF manages is heavily utilized for these activities, it is not generally considered to be accessible, and several notable barriers exist that make accessing this space by mobility-impaired visitors challenging.

Background / Rule

The City of Charlottesville is an active 'participating jurisdiction' ("PJ") in the Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") program offered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") and, as such, is the periodic recipient of federal funds to support eligible community development, affordable housing and planning activities. HUD regulations permit PJs to award CDBG funds to support certain activities designed to support economic development and/or to improve public facilities and infrastructure, such as by removing barriers to access, objectives which would both be supported by the proposal under consideration.

Analysis

CDBG-funded planning grants are a tool commonly used by PJs in HUD programs, including the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development ("DHCD"). With support from DHCD staff and building on recent examples of CDBG-funded subrecipients like ReadyKids to use their awards to leverage additional funds from non-city sources, the proposed planning grant has been designed to support the development of a comprehensive plan for the financing and development of accessibility-related enhancements to the IX Arts Park.

This investment of CDBG funds is designed to build the capacity of IAF staff to develop a comprehensive development plan, in part by funding their work with landscape designers with experience in accessible design. In addition, if approved, program staff would continue to work with DHCD staff to plan the implementation of the planning grant, as they have significant experience in this area and have offered their continued support.

Financial Impact

There is no adverse financial impact to this proposed action, as the funds to be used are non-local funds allocated to the City by HUD to support community development and planning activities, and, as such, do not draw from the city's General Fund. Rather, use of these funds as recommended here will

serve to address important community needs while at the same time supporting the city's continued eligibility to participate in HUD programs.

Recommendation

Based on the anticipated benefits for Charlottesville community of the proposed activity presented here today, staff recommends that Council approve the proposal as well as the associated appropriation of funds within the CDBG Fund needed to implement the proposed program and related enhancements.

Recommended Motion (if Applicable)

I move that Council approve the RESOLUTION approving the proposed CDBG-funded planning grant to the IX Arts Foundation and to appropriate up to \$25,000 in CDBG funds to implement the proposal presented here before us today.

Attachments

1. CDBG PY26 IX Arts Council Resolution to Approve
2. IX Arts Foundation 2026 CDBG Accessibility & Infrastructure WEB