



DATE: April 4, 2022

MEMO TO: Jessica Vealitzek, Chair
Operations Committee

Terry Wilke, Chair
Planning Committee

Julie Simpson, Chair
Finance Committee

FROM: Rebekah Snyder
Director of Community Engagement & Partnerships

REQUEST: Provide policy direction whether to proceed with a potential grant application to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and/or the preparation of a master plan for the Adlai E. Stevenson Historic Home, Service Building, and property.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS SUPPORTED: Public Access and Connections, Organizational Sustainability

FINANCIAL DATA: The proposed grant presents an opportunity to apply for \$1,100,000.00 in funding to support maintenance, renovation and improvements to the Adlai E. Stevenson Historic Home and Service Building. The cost of a master plan is estimated to be \$100,000.00.

BACKGROUND: In October 2019, the District solicited competitive bids for exterior renovations to the Stevenson Home. The project had been estimated at \$550,000.00, but the lowest responsible bid for the work was \$597,838.00 when bids were opened on December 10, 2019. The potential contract award was discussed by Committees in February and March 2020. At its March 5, 2020, meeting, the consensus of the Finance Committee was for staff to investigate opportunities for grants that would finance some or all of the renovation work and to ask the lowest responsible bidder to extend its bid through the May 12, 2020 Board meeting date. The bidder complied.

However, the first statewide emergency proclamation due to COVID-19 was issued on March 20, 2020. The bid extension expired with no action taken.

On May 24, 2021, a Joint Committee meeting was held at the Stevenson Home to reconsider the renovation of the Stevenson Home and Service Building in conjunction with the District's annual CIP program review. As part of the discussion, it was estimated that the cost of the exterior renovations to the Stevenson Home had likely escalated to approximately \$700,000.00 (from \$597,838.00 the year before) based on further aging of the structure and increases in material costs. In addition, a rough estimate of \$400,000.00 was provided for renovating the exterior of the Stevenson Service Building. The total rough estimate for exterior (only) renovations to the two Stevenson buildings was \$1,100,000.00.

At that meeting, the Committees ceased discussion of renovations and instead recommended funding in the amount of \$100,000.00 within the FY 2022 Capital Improvement Plan to develop a master plan for the Stevenson Home and surrounding landscape.

The estimated \$1,100,000.00 for exterior renovations of both the Stevenson Home and Service Building became the basis for a direct appeal to the State of Illinois for grant funding immediately following the Joint Committee meeting. The funding was approved in the State budget.

Since May 2021, material prices have continued to increase and the buildings have continued to deteriorate. No additional analysis of the needs of the buildings or updated estimates for the cost of repairs has occurred because it was unknown when the State's grant commitment would become available.

In February 2022, staff received an invitation to submit grant application documents to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), requesting the \$1,100,000.00 grant. The 2022 CIP identifies \$100,000.00 to develop the master plan.

Staff is seeking direction whether to proceed with the grant application. By pursuing the grant, the District would be committing to the long-term ownership and maintenance of the Stevenson Home and Service Building. Staff is also seeking direction whether to proceed with a master plan of the site, under any of the following scenarios: (i) the District applies for and obtains the grant and renovates the buildings, (ii) the District does not apply for or does not receive the grant, but keeps the buildings, or (iii) the District demolishes the buildings. The purpose of the master planning process would be to identify more energy efficient operations for the Stevenson Home and Service Building, more efficient parking operations, opportunities for better public access (including better accessibility for disabled users), and (assuming demolition) potential alternative uses for the Stevenson Home property.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Executive Director, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Finance, Director of Planning and Land Preservation, Director of Operations and Infrastructure, Corporate Counsel.