

July 7, 2020

Dear Chairman, Board of Supervisors, and CAO,

Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, other local community organizations, and residents from DUCs have repeatedly engaged with this board since March in an attempt to work collaboratively to address the urgent needs that this community is facing in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This county has received over \$98 million dollars to provide support to Fresno County residents, and, appropriately, Fresno County residents are counting on the support of their local government. during this global pandemic and the economic turmoil that it has caused. For over three months, residents have asked their elected officials, staff from various departments, the CAO's office, County Counsel, and others to put resources to help those most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, this Board's actions have fallen short when it comes to responding to community needs.

This administration must allocate CARES dollars - designed specifically to mitigate the impacts from COVID. Critical needs and opportunities have been brought to the attention of this board numerous times and are on the public record. A list of community priorities are listed for your reference and include:

- Emergency Rent, Mortgage, and Utilities Assistance
- Mobile Testing sites in DUCs
- PPE for essential workers and volunteers in Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs)
- Investment in broadband infrastructure for DUCs
- Investment in Community Centers in DUCs to provide essential services for residents
- Any investments necessary to support equitable and effective remote participation in public meetings

COMMENT CDBG

Chairman Mendes and Supervisors,

First, we would like to thank public works staff for making time to talk through some of our questions and concerns regarding the CDBG-CV project list.

Per our conversation , It is our understanding that staff looked towards the CAO and the public health department to allocate these dollars to address the counties more urgent needs as related to COVID-19. Unfortunately, there was no effort to reach out to CBOs or community leaders to gather input on what those urgent needs are, nor was there any effort to look through the comments given by residents at past public hearings and public comment periods. While we appreciate investments in emergency shelters and public health outreach but remain concerned that there is no allocation for other identified community needs with respect to COVI-19. Specifically, the proposed project list does not include any of the various priorities that community residents have been raising since the beginning of the pandemic, such as, rental assistance, utilities assistance, broadband access, cash assistance, food distributions located in DUCs and support for children at home, all which are eligible uses for the CDBG dollars.

We ask that this board redirect funds for emergency assistance and broadband infrastructure improvements in unincorporated communities to address the growing urgent needs of the most vulnerable individuals in the county.