Legislation Text

File #: [19-0939], **Version:** 1

Consider Approving the Language Access Plan.

Staff:
Loryn B. Clark, Executive Director
Sarah Osmer Viñas, Assistant Director
Megan Peters, Community Connections Coordinator

Department:
Housing and Community

Overview: Tonight Council will consider approving a Language Access Plan (LAP), a key recommendation identified through the Building Integrated Communities (BIC) community planning process.

Recommendation:
That the Council approve the Language Access Plan (LAP).

Overview of the Building Integrated Communities (BIC) Initiative:
BIC is a multi-year planning process that helps North Carolina local governments successfully engage with immigrant and refugee residents to improve relationships, enhance communication, and promote civic participation and leadership in local government. The BIC project aligns with the Town's goal to make Chapel Hill a *Place for Everyone*.

Overview of the Proposed Language Access Plan (LAP):

- Over the past six months, the BIC Implementation Team prioritized the development of a Town-wide Language Access Plan (LAP), consistent with Strategy 10.1 of the Action Plan: *Create a Town-wide Language Access Plan, in partnership with community organizations serving residents with low English proficiency, with particular focus on language justice and legal compliance.*
- A LAP outlines policies and procedures to provide the most effective services for limited English proficient (LEP) residents. The federal government requires that organizations that receive federal funding take reasonable steps to ensure access to services for LEP individuals, which is typically articulated through a LAP.
- The BIC Implementation Team developed a draft LAP that includes language access policies and procedures related to:
    1) Language assistance services, and
    2) Employee training and incentive
- Staff presented the draft LAP to Council at a work session in September 2019, and the feedback offered by Council is reflected in the LAP before Council tonight.

Fiscal Impact/Resources: Staff estimate the total cost of LAP implementation to be: $23,600 in

FY20, $26,500 in FY21, and $28,500 in FY22 (see attachment). There are sufficient resources available in this year's budget (FY20) within Housing and Community and Police to implement the proposed LAP, including the recent Duke Energy Foundation grant award of $4,000. Staff propose that Council consider the pay incentive detailed in the LAP and other potential resource needs for LAP implementation as part of the FY21 budget process. Staff will continue to explore opportunities for leveraging funding from private foundations to support LAP implementation.

Attachments:

- Draft Staff Presentation
- Resolution
- Language Access Plan
- Language Access Plan Proposed Budget
- Language Access Plan Implementation Timeline

The Agenda will reflect the text below and/or the motion text will be used during the meeting.

PRESENTER: Sarah Osmer Viñas, Assistant Director
Megan Peters, Community Connections Coordinator

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council approve the Language Access Plan (LAP).