

Resolution No.:	<u>20-780</u>
Introduced:	<u>March 18, 2025</u>
Adopted:	<u>April 22, 2025</u>

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Lead Sponsor: Council President Stewart, Councilmember Friedson, and Councilmember Katz

SUBJECT: Resolution to Establish an Advisory Workgroup on a Strategic Plan for County Grants

Background

1. Montgomery County is dedicated to offering grant programs that support community organizations' projects and initiatives, addressing essential needs that enhance the well-being of County residents.
2. The County has a history of providing grants awards to organizations for a broad range of programs serving community needs. The Office of Grants Management was created in FY23 to serve as the central administrative and coordinating County office for grants programs. Their role includes developing countywide policies and procedures regarding grants management consistent with the County's racial equity and social justice goals. They have two areas of focus, incoming grants – grants that the County applies for and receives from outside sources, and outgoing grants – grants that the County awards to outside entities.
3. The Office of Grants Management manages three traditional outgoing pools of funds, (1) Community Grants, (2) Community Legacy Grants, and (3) Cost Sharing: CIP grants with MCG departments administering the implementation of individual grant awards. Due to the historical nature of these programs, significant challenges have emerged in restructuring them to better align with community needs. The Council has engaged in extensive discussions addressing issues such as the grant programs broad scope of focus, the high volume of applications, the timeliness of decisions and communication with applicants, the associated workload for OGM, and coordination with the Executive branch.
4. As of February 27, 2025, the Council's Government and Operations Committee has, on two occasions during the current fiscal year, requested the County Executive to provide a intentional plan for the traditional grant programs. The responses received have not outlined a clear plan of action, and progress on necessary improvements remains stagnant. As a result, community organizations, County Boards, Commissions and Committees, County departments managing grants, and Councilmembers have expressed ongoing

frustration due to the lack of resolve and the absence of a pragmatic approach to addressing these issues.

5. A Council workgroup is necessary to advise the County Council on a strategic plan for the traditional pool of grant funds. Tasks for the workgroup include the following:
 - Create a strategic plan for the Community Grant awards process.
 - The recommendations should include a detailed plan for the new grant cycle that will begin FY28 – June 1, 2027. The grant solicitation, application review and award notification process would need to take place in FY27.
 - Develop a strategic plan for the Community Grants Legacy awards
 - The workgroup must evaluate all potential options, including integrating grants into departmental base budgets, reassessing grant awards based on a recommended criteria, developing a new grant program, or discontinuing the legacy grant programs with a structured plan to mitigate the impact on nonprofit organizations.
 - Develop a consistent criteria and process for the annual Cost Sharing: CIP grants
 - The draft plan should detail engagement with organizations who have applied for Legislative Bonds, funding requested to the state and potentially to the County and a timeline for awarding County grant funds that corresponds to award notifications from the state.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

1. The County Council appoints an Advisory Workgroup on a Strategic Plan for County Grants.
2. The workgroup will include a representative from the following organizations to participate:
 - Office of Grants Management
 - Catholic Charities
 - Department of Health and Human Services, representative to be chosen by the Director
 - Department of Recreation, representative to be chosen by the Director
 - Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington
 - Montgomery County Black Collective

- Muslim Community Foundation
 - Nonprofit Montgomery
 - Primary Care Coalition of Montgomery County
3. The workgroup will review the outgoing grants program facilitated through the Office of Grants Management. Workgroup duties include: (1) develop a proposed strategic plan for the Community Grants program; (2) make recommendations for resolving and transition the Community Grants Legacy awards; and (3) develop proposed criteria and process for the annual Cost Sharing: CIP grants program.
 4. The workgroup must consider information available through current grants, best practices and innovations across the three grant programs.
 5. The Council directs the Executive Director to designate appropriate members of the Council staff to support the Work Group.
 6. The workgroup must submit its interim report to the Council by August 31, 2025, and a final report by November 1, 2025.

This is a correct copy of Council action.



Sara R. Tenenbaum
Clerk of the Council