

CONSOLIDATED PLAN ADVISORY BOARD (CPAB)

MINUTES

525 B Street, San Diego, CA 92101

Wednesday, May 10, 2023

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT	BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yegin Chen, Council District 1 • Abena Bradford, Council District 3 • Lauren Garces, Council District 5 • Rich Thesing, Council District 7 • Victoria Barba, Council District 8 • Peter Dennehy, Council District 9 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VACANT, Council District 2 • VACANT, Council District 4 • VACANT, Council District 6

STAFF PRESENT	ATTENDANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michele Marano, Community Development Coordinator • Nadine Hassoun, Community Development Project Specialist • Ashley Gain, Community Development Project Manager • Nancy Luevano, Community Development Project Manager 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>No members of the public joined the meeting. Staff members (1) from the San Diego Housing Commission also attended.</i></p>

Call to Order

1. CPAB Chair Peter Dennehy called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Peter Dennehy took roll call; five board members were present. Quorum was achieved at the same time. CPAB member Victoria Barba joined at 10:10 a.m.

Board Member Announcements

There were no board member announcements

Staff Announcements

2. Community Development Coordinator Michele Marano announced that the City Council approved the FY24 Annual Action Plan and allocations on April 24th. All subrecipients were notified and informed that they were recommended for funding. Participants were also invited to attend a virtual Agreement Execution Workshop on May 23rd at 10:00am. The workshop is optional however organizations are encouraged to attend since topics such as contract expectations and documents that will be required to execute agreement will be discussed. A handbook on contractual obligations will also be released the day of the workshop.

The workshop information will be added to the City of San Diego webpage <https://www.sandiego.gov/cdbg>.

3. Community Development Project Specialist Nadine Hassoun announced a new team member. Nancy Luevano joined the team as a Project Manager and will be serving as a liaison to CPAB. Nancy is coming from SBCS a nonprofit organization formally South Bay Community Services. She worked with SBCS for over 16 years and during that time gained vast experience working with grant funded programs that served low-income communities in the south region.

Approval of Minutes

4. A modification of the minutes for April 12, 2023, will be made to include PowerPoint slides that were missing from the Housing Commission projects presented during the meeting. Modifications will be emailed to CPAB Board members and will be added to the website.
5. Motion to approve minutes from previous meeting by Abena Bradford, seconded by Yegin Chen. Minutes approved with modifications, 6-0.

Non-agenda Public Comment

No non-agenda public comments were received.

Discussion Items

6. Community Development Project Manager Ashely Gain presented on **Applicant & CPAB Fiscal Year (2024) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application Process Review**. (*Document in presentation materials*).
 - a. CPAB member Lauren Graces shared that most of the negative comments on the survey were towards the ED Grants portal and inquired if there were any plans to change the software. Community Development Project Manager Ashley Gain shared that there was presently a software consultant called REI that managed the ED Grants software. The software was originally designed seven years ago. Ashley noted that the survey results will be shared with REI. Community Development Coordinator, Michele Marano shared that there were a few glitches in the software during the application process however, REI has resolved the problems. Michele also mentioned that staff turnover in organizations may be a contributing factor towards not being familiarized with the ED Grants portal. Ashly Gain mentioned that, in effort to assist organizations with the application process, an in-app guidance platform, Whafix, will be added to the ED Grants portal. The platform will provide step-by-step walkthroughs and provide guidance with navigation. A video will also be made to show step-by-step process on how to apply for CDBG grants and the application process.
 - b. CPAB member Abena Bradford inquired how for-profit organizations were notified that CDBG grants were not available for-profit organizations. Community Development Coordinator, Michele Marano noted that the Consolidated Plan (five-year document) states that the grant is not meant for profit organizations. It is also clearly stated in RFQ workshops that the grant is only offered to nonprofit organizations. Next, Michele clarified that under

the Community Block Grant regulations a for-profit organization may apply however, the City of San Diego has determined in the Consolidated Plan that grant funds would be best utilized supporting nonprofit organizations serving the community. There is no indication this process will change due to the impact it would make in traditionally underserved low-moderate income communities.

c. CPAB member Rich Thesing asked if organizations were encouraged to apply to become a nonprofit organization in order to qualify for a CDBG Grant. Community Development Coordinator, Michele Marano, shared that she did not recall any documentation that stated that it has been done in the past. Rich Thesing shared that there was an agency that applied for the CDBG grant that was 50% for profit and 50% nonprofit. In this case, the agency used funds from their for-profit to support their nonprofit programs which was noted in their RFQ. Ashley Gain clarified that Community Development staff reviewed applications first to make sure that they qualified for the grant funding. In this case, a staff member determined that the organization was eligible for funding prior to the CPAB review.

d. CPAB member Abena Bradford inquired what are the characteristics of a nonprofit requirements. Community Development Project Manager Nadine Hassoun shared that the requirements are noted in the RFQ workshop presentation which is available in the City of San Diego website <https://www.sandiego.gov/cdbg>. Abena mentioned that before submitting an RFQ, organizations may want to review a checklist to refer to their qualifications. Michele Marano noted that there is currently a check list posted on the City of San Diego EDD website, <https://www.sandiego.gov/economic-development/nonprofit-programs>. Michele made a disclaimer that the City of San Diego is currently going through web design revisions made by the department. Michele shared that there is an updated PDF version of the checklist that may be available as a handout. The document will be emailed to the CPAB board members. In addition, the checklist will also be available to the public via webpage (*listed above*), and it will also be included in the Eblast Newsletter. Michele reviewed the requirement check list items for qualifications to include a copy of the organization's Articles of Incorporation as filed with the Secretary of State, valid EIN number, registered with www.sam.gov/SAM, State Tax determination letter, Financial Statements, Cash Balance at least \$12,500-\$25,000, a copy of most recent organizations tax return and a organization chart for the organization administrating funded projects.

e. CPAB Chen Yegin inquired if there was a place where organizations may go to get financial statements prepared at a lower cost due to the high cost of the statements. Michele Marano shared that nonprofit organizations may use grant funds to get financial statements prepared however, this excludes new applicants. Michele also shared that the Non-Profit Academy attempted to seek low-cost CPA's to prepare the financial statements at a discount rate however, they were not able to find one. Michele disclosed that organizations that receive funding of \$750,000 and above must provide audited financial statements. The statements demonstrate that the non-profit have been operating for more than a few years and it is not a new organization.

f. CPAB Abena Bradford asked if there were nonprofit organizations that did not have an infrastructure in place and utilized Fiscal Sponsors. Were these organizations able to apply

for funding? Nadine Hassoun shared that this was previously accepted however, no longer is. Michele Marano stated that smaller grants such as those offered by the Promise Zone may continue to accept Fiscal Sponsors.

g. CPAB Victoria Barba stated that for those organizations that wished to apply as a subcontractor and were included in the organization's MOU Agreement, would this situation be appropriate for CDBG funding? Michele Marano replied that she will be looking into this further.

h. CPAB member Rich Thesing commented that the scoring process was easy on ED Grants. Rich mentioned that all the glitches were resolved which made it easier to work with. Rich commended the group in how things were coming together.

i. Michele Marano, Community Development Coordinator and staff reviewed City Council updates to CPAB Board Members.

j. CPAB member Rich Thesing inquired about the wording in the CDBG grant application. Rich noted that some of the wording in the application was ambiguous. CPAB member Yegin Chen agreed that the wording in the application may be simplified. Yegin Chen mentioned that he would like to get to know the organizations a little better. Perhaps include questions about their services, promotional materials and success stories. This would be helpful to paint a picture of their organization. Rich Thesing shared that he noticed that some answers in the application were "cut and pasted." Rich stated that if questions were asked differently, it may eliminate duplication of answers. Victoria Barba inquired if organizations submitted a monthly reporting or only an end of year report where they included their success stories. Michele Marano shared the end of the year reports include photos, success stories and testimonials. These items are not a requirement for the RFQ. Applicants may attach additional files if they desire.

k. CPAB member Yegin Chen asked about the scoring and funding process. Yegin inquired if there was a form of capping an amount that an organization may receive. Michele Marano, Community Development Coordinator shared there is currently no amount capped for organizations. If projects cost more than the grant amount additional funding sources may be used. Community Development Project Specialist Ashley Gain added that organizations gained points if they had an additional funding source. Rich Thesing asked if applicants have access to their score? Ashley Gain shared previous applicants have requested copies of the CPAB notes. This information was later used for applying for the next Fiscal Year.

l. CPAB member Victoria Barba inquired if there was a marketing budget for advertising promotional material for CDBG grants. Michele Marano shared that marketing is part of the 20% Admin Funds that may be used. There is not a specific amount set aside for marketing, however, they may be used under admin funds. Victoria inquired what efforts are currently made to reach out to nonprofit organizations in the community in order to spread the word. Community Development Project Specialist, Ashley Gian shared that there are some publications such as the San Diego Voice & Viewpoint that featured CDBG grant information. Victoria would like to see an event in the community i.e., community fair, newsletter or social media campaign, for the City staff (including City Council Office) to spread the word. Nadine

Hassoun stated that these were good ideas. Nadine will also reach out to Council Members to post on their social media. Michele Marano, Community Development Coordinator shared that an email is sent the council office when launching a program. Other suggestions may include attending multi-cultural events i.e., set up a booth in a community fair. Send City staff to the local libraries to have “meet up’s” where staff are available to answer questions. CPAB Abena Bradford inquired if there was a Public Relations person available to assist. Ashley Gain, Community Development Project Manager noted that there is a Public Information Officer in charge of sending out the press releases, overall web page, PSA’s, social media and tv channels. Abena inquired if he may be invited to a CPAB meeting for the board to ask questions. Michele Marano shared that she will invite Jerry to attend the EDD Overview meeting.

m. CPAB member Victoria Barba asked what was new in the application process that may have caused a subrecipient to be disqualified (*referring to the survey’s feedback*). Michele Marano shared that there were two things: first, some organizations were provided a conditional approval of their RFQ. As a result, there were additional attachments to be included in the RFP response. One of the two organizations did not follow through and were disqualified. The second was that there was a mandatory workshop for the RFP participants required by Council Policy. The workshop was recorded for those participants that were not able to attend. There was one organization that did not present a certification of attendance. This organization was disqualified. Michele mentioned the response in the survey that stated that staff were not available to answer questions on the deadline date. Michele clarified that staff was available to answer questions, however, the cut off time was noon on the RFP deadline of the application. A few applicants attempted to reach out to staff after the cut off time. Ashely Gain, Community Development Project Manager clarified that the application was extended three days due to ED Grants portal glitches.

Other Items

- | |
|---|
| 7. Next CPAB meeting will be on either June or July 2023. The date will be confirmed. |
|---|

Adjournment

- | |
|---------------------------------|
| 8. Meeting closed at 11:24 a.m. |
|---------------------------------|

Economic Development Department

Applicant & CPAB Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application Process Review

Consolidated Plan Advisory Board
May 10, 2023



1

 Economic Development

Changes in FY 2024

- COVID related impacts
 - Adjusted language to focus on resilience, rather than Covid-19
- Reintroduced deductions

²
sandiego.gov

2

SD Economic Development

Responses to RFQs and RFPs Received

Year	RFQ Responses	RFP Responses
FY22	60	42
FY22 CARES	32	21
FY22 Round 2	23	12
FY23	66	44
FY24	40	31

sandiego.gov³

3

SD Economic Development

FY 2024 CDBG RFP Summary

- Public Services**
 - 23 Projects: \$2,131,283
- Community Economic Development**
 - 10 Projects: \$1,839,702
- Nonprofit CIP (Facilities)**
 - 7 Projects: \$3,108,506

sandiego.gov⁴

4

SD Economic Development

FY 2024 Application Process Survey

- Released on April 10, 2023
- 26 Respondents
- 20 Questions
- Questions on RFQ phase, RFP phase, ED Grants system, and overall experience.

The City of SAN DIEGO

The City of San Diego is constantly striving to improve our grant application processes, and we depend on your feedback to make positive changes.

We would like to know more about your experience working with the Economic Development Department's Community Development Division during the Request for Qualifications and Request for Proposal (RFQ/RFP) phases of applying for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for Fiscal Year 2024 (FY2024).

Your identity and responses will remain confidential.

We greatly appreciate your participation in this brief survey.

The deadline to complete this survey is Monday, May 1, 2023.

Page 1 of 4

5 sandiego.gov

5

SD Economic Development

Question: How did you hear about the release of the FY24 CDBG RFQ?

Source	Count
Community Development Division E-Newsletter	12
City of San Diego Website	8
Other	4
Another Community Organization (Please specify below.)	3
City of San Diego Social Media	1
Google	1

6 sandiego.gov

6

Slide 6

HNO Could you try including the # for each bar?

Hassoun, Nadine, 2023-05-04T21:09:16.827

Question: How satisfied were you with the FY2024 CDBG RFQ Process?



Average: 4.0 out of 5

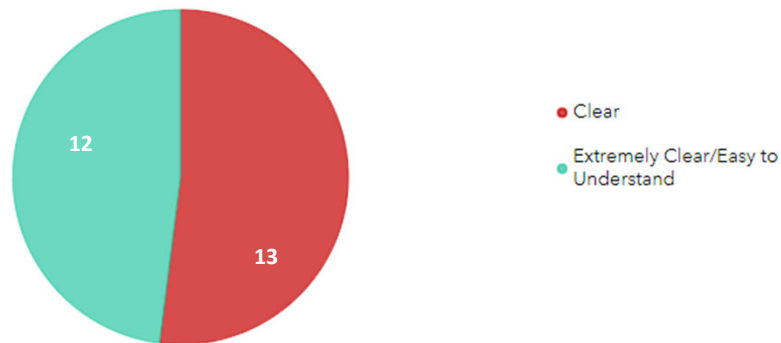
Comments Received:

- Online process was not intuitive, but the step by step instructions help
- CDBG staff was accessible for technical assistance
- Application felt clear
- There were new requirements added and staff was not available to answer a day of question
- Was consistent with prior years
- EDGrants is difficult to navigate
- There were technical glitches that resulted in a time crunch to complete the RFQ
- Software questions were responded to quickly
- Technical assistance appointments were very helpful
- Lack of equity between non-profits and for-profit agencies
- Overall easy process

7

Question: Did you understand the FY2024 CDBG RFQ Requirements?

HNO



8

Slide 8

HNO Include percentages in the pie chart. Remove unclear/too complicated from the key, since we didn't receive any of those.

Hassoun, Nadine, 2023-05-04T21:09:53.984

Question: How satisfied were you with the FY2024 CDBG RFP Process?



Average: 4.2 out of 5

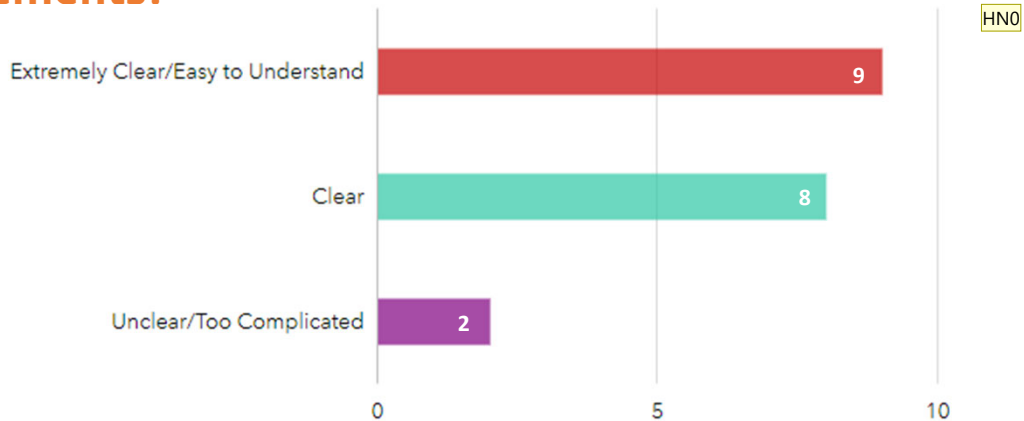
HNO

Comments Received:

- It is costly and takes too much time to apply for CIP funding
- Staff is very clear during the webinars and scoring guide
- The process is too lengthy, creates barriers for smaller organizations
- Mandatory TA session was extremely helpful
- "Staff = stellar. Application portal = Ugh... room for improvement"
- Repetitive questions in the RFP process
- ED Grants glitches made the process challenging

9

Question: Did you understand the FY2024 CDBG RFP Requirements?



HNO

10

Slide 9

HNO Ensure font size is the same

Hassoun, Nadine, 2023-05-04T21:11:04.643

Slide 10

HNO Add #s to bars so that results are more clear

Hassoun, Nadine, 2023-05-04T21:11:35.756

Question: How would you rate the usefulness of the information provided in the mandatory workshops for completing the RFP?

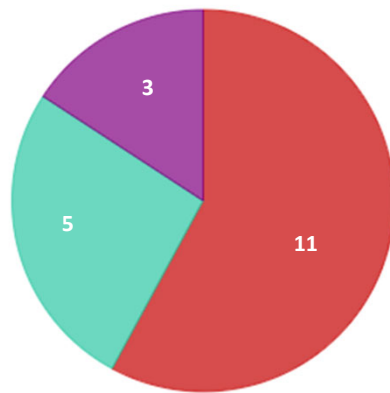


Average: 4.5 out of 5

11

Question: If you joined a technical assistance meeting, how would you rate the usefulness of the information presented?

HNO

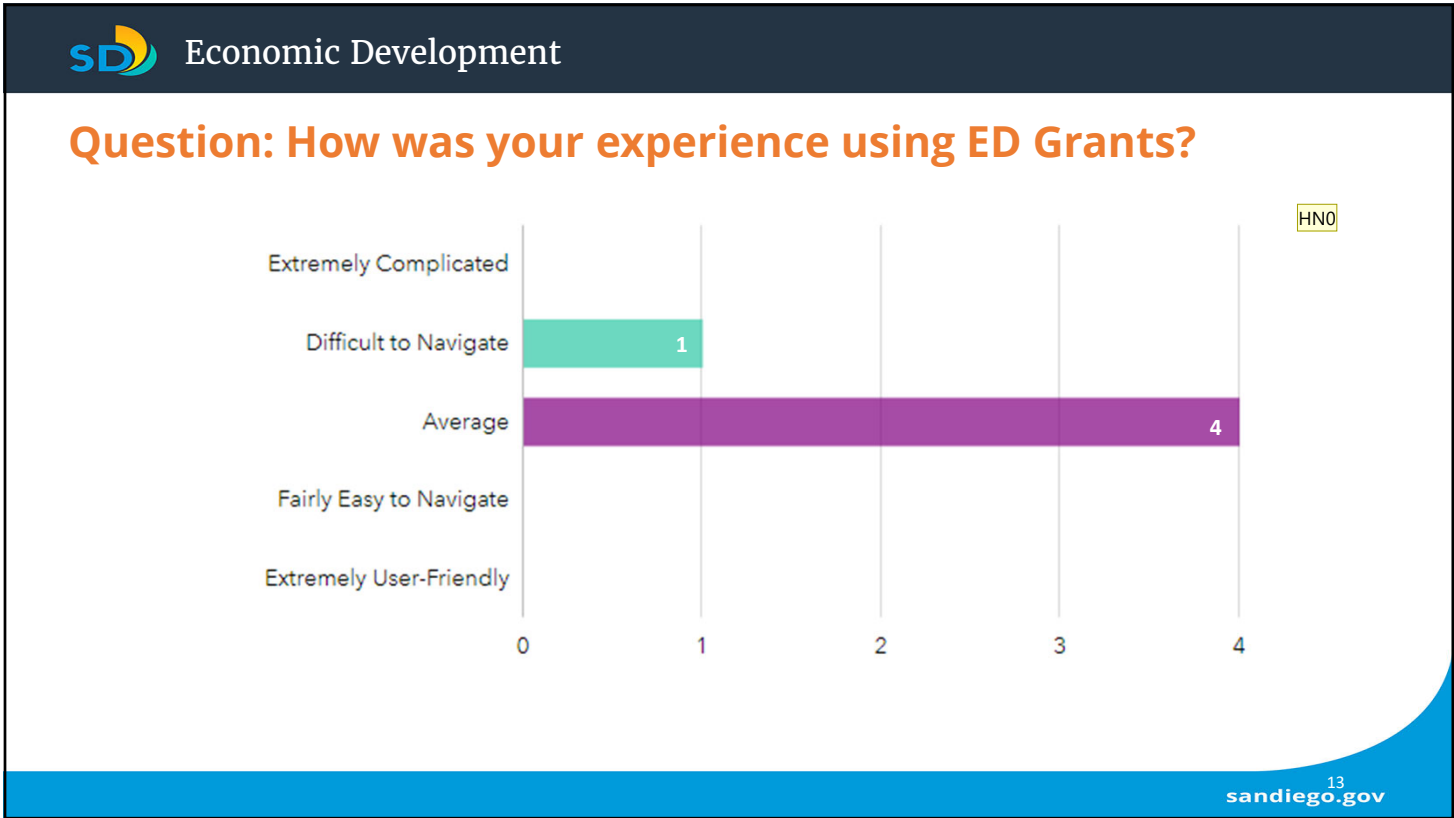


- Extremely Useful
- Not applicable. I did not join a technical assistance meeting.
- Somewhat Useful

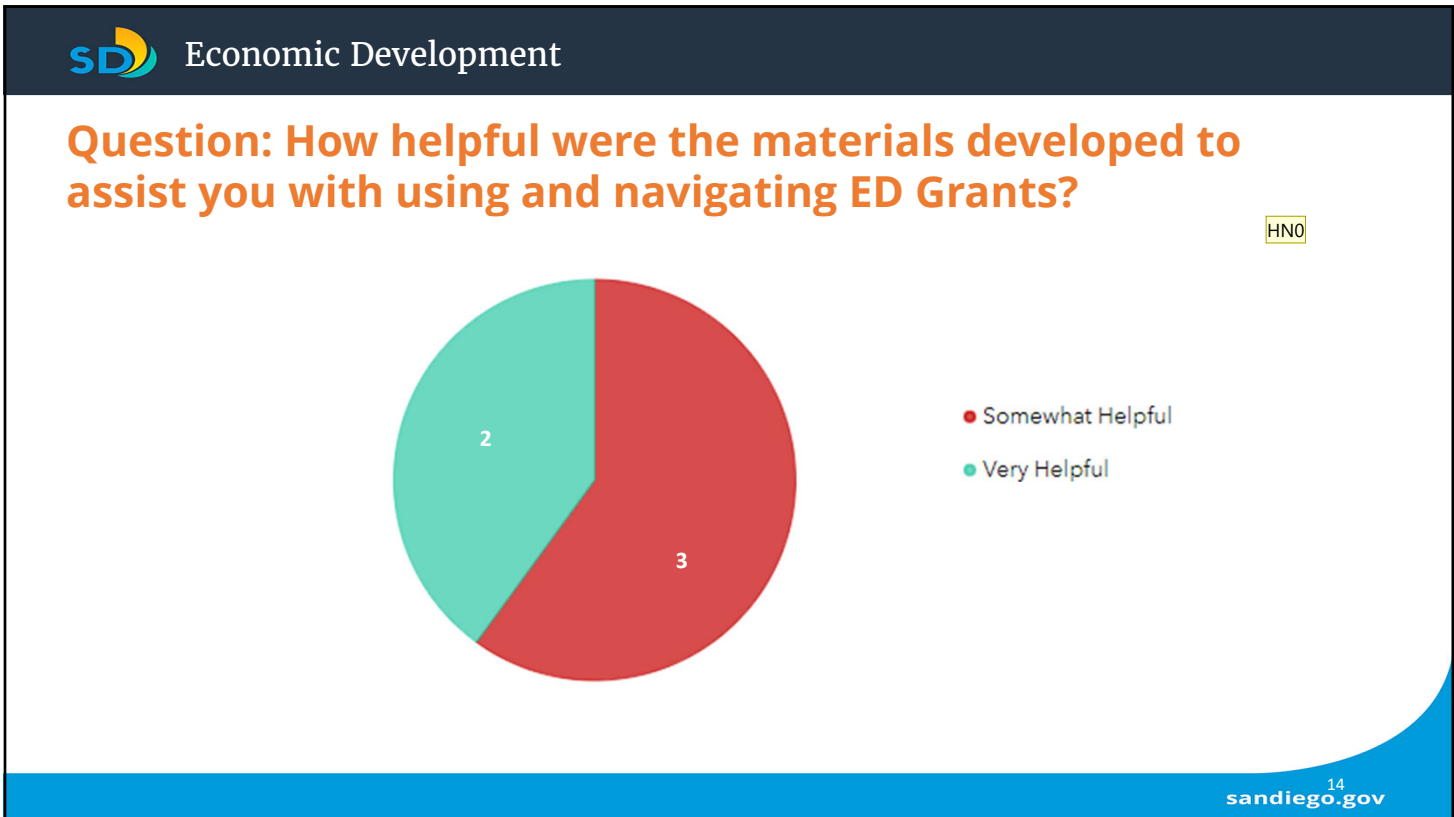
12

HNO Add percentages

Hassoun, Nadine, 2023-05-04T21:11:54.084



13



14

Slide 13

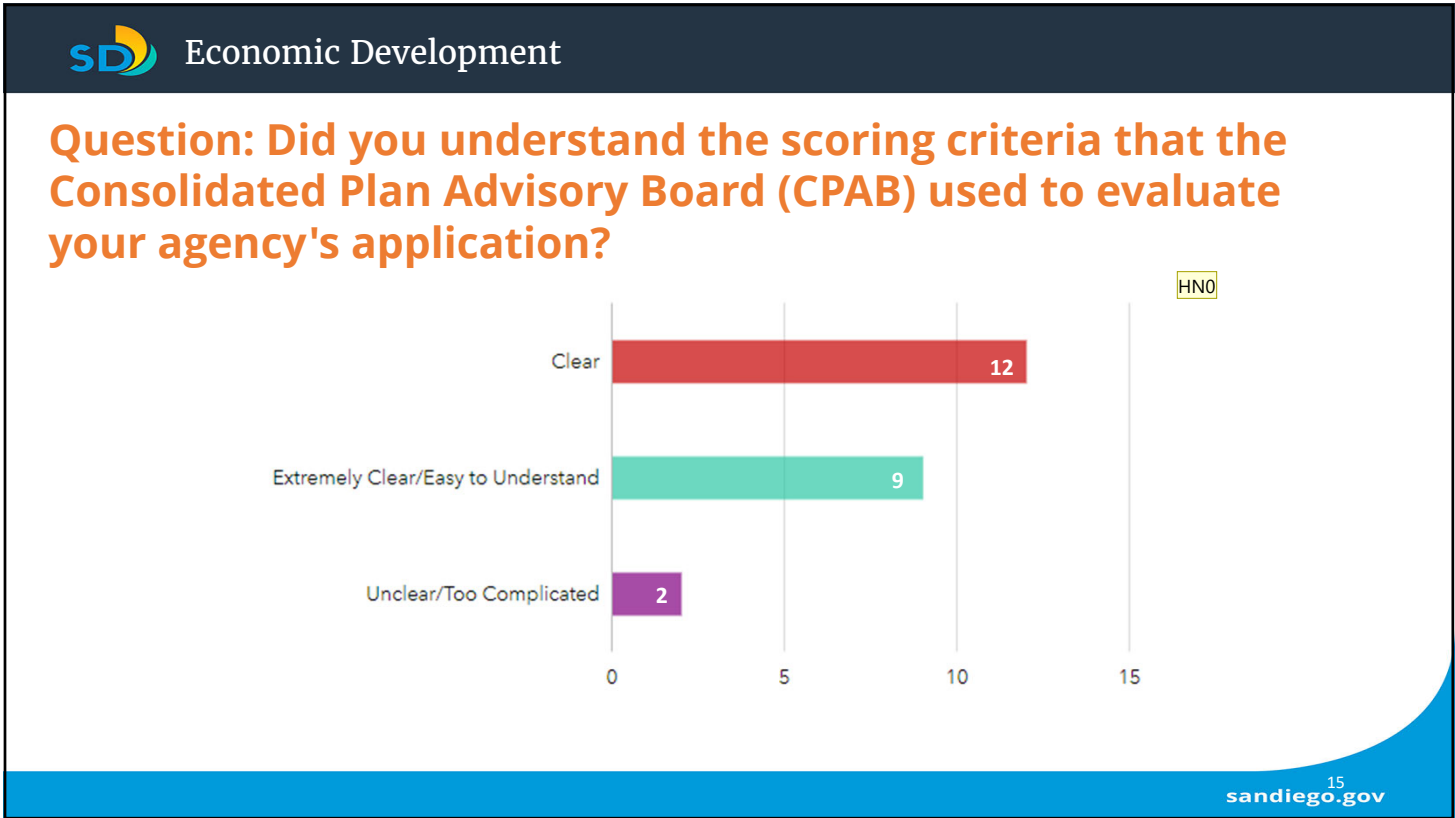
HNO Add #s

Hassoun, Nadine, 2023-05-04T21:12:10.509

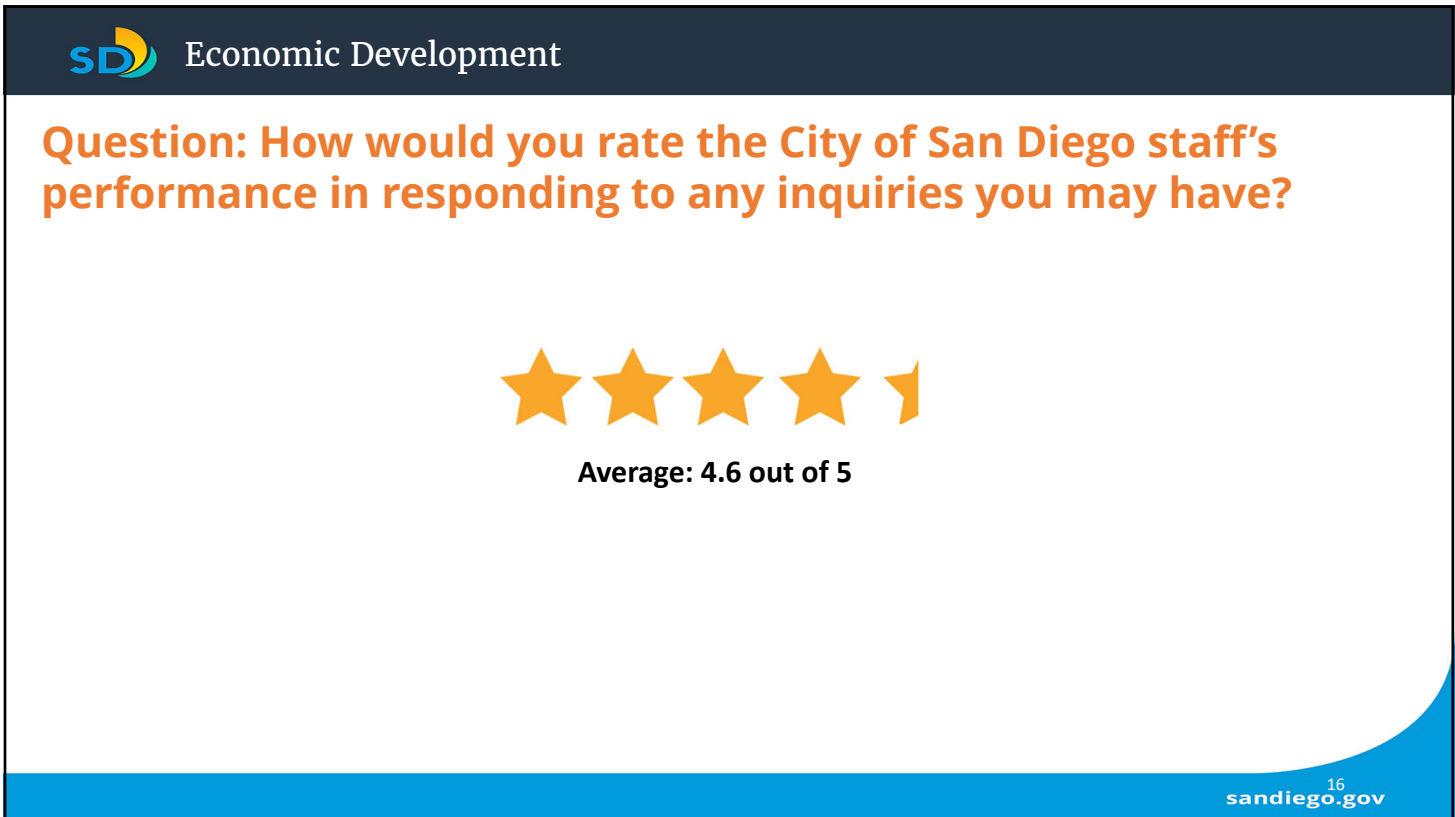
Slide 14

HNO Add percentages

Hassoun, Nadine, 2023-05-04T21:12:21.975



15



16

HNO Add #s

Hassoun, Nadine, 2023-05-04T21:12:31.406



Comments and Suggestions Received from Applicants

- Confusion around the scoring with **secured funding**, it doesn't make sense that an organization with 80%-100% should rank higher because it means they don't need the CDBG funds
- Confusion around additional documentation being required
- It is clear CDBG team is understaffed, the **application checklist needs to be updated** with requirement changes
- Staff was **very helpful** and responsive
- Please increase the number of applicant representatives with the ability to submit
- Michele Marano was incredibly helpful
- No one was around the day the application was due and in the past there were **glitches**



Comments and Suggestions Received from Applicants

- Incredibly stressful process, the **portal does not foster collaboration**, it's a statement of record. Would be helpful to have a word version of the document
- Would be helpful to **publish a guide in advance** of the RFP (specifically CIP) to help organizations prepare
- More individuals should be scoring these applications (mentioned open CPAB vacancies). A **sum of ranks approach** would eliminate evaluator biases
- Ed Grants is cumbersome, and **causes inequities**



Comments and Suggestions Received from CPAB

- Requested automatically generated PDFs to be sent to reviewers HNO
- Prep prior to the RFQ process, **generate awareness in diverse communities** and assist them in preparing
- **Identify which Promise Zone or LMI communities are not being served** and do extra outreach to support them
- To encourage more applications from organizations that have not previously applied, could these **new applicants receive a small automatic points bonus** in the scoring?
- Suggestion of implementing a cap on how much an individual organization could receive to "**spread the benefits**"



Future meeting discussion topics from CPAB

- The current requirement that CPAB meetings need at least 5 members present to start needs to be re-examined and possibly changed, particularly in light of the three current vacancies out of 9 positions. Changing the requirement to require that a majority of CPAB members be present (ie resulting in a requirement of 4 out of the current 6 members being present) would make CPAB more efficient.
- I would like to read about stories of "success" and "failure". By that I mean stories that either reached their goal and everything went smoothly, or were not working out but whoever was in charge of the program innovated and everything worked out at the end.
- Minimum qualifications for organizations to apply and identifying how much funding is going to specific zip codes/ communities and where there are gaps of support needed.
- Sources of funding and how we can receive more money
- Types of non-profit services that would be beneficial
- Brainstorm how to include communities that appear locked out of the process

Slide 19

HNO Be sure font size/type is same across slides

Hassoun, Nadine, 2023-05-04T21:13:21.839

Thank you