

The Clay County Board of County Commissioner's Grants and Community and Social Services Divisions held an open forum for public comment on the proposed plan for the FY24-25 Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan at the Keystone Heights Historic Pavilion, 565 Lawrence Blvd., Keystone Heights, Florida, on Monday, June 17, 2024 at 6 p.m.

There were seven (7) attendees.

Megan Covey, Grants Director, opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and presented an overview of the Community Development Block Grant and the proposed 2024-25 budget of \$1,000,319 broken into two proposed spending categories: Public Infrastructure and Housing Rehab.

Gabrielle Gunn, Community and Social Services Director, reviewed the agenda and facilitated the meeting's discussion.

Question: *What qualities make up a vibrant neighborhood or community?*

Public Comments:

- Trees & fences
- Good infrastructure
- Community events
- Availability to community goods and services (food, public facilities, trash collection)
- Affordable, good quality housing
- Schools and libraries
- Recreation and recreational facilities
- Community relationships with city government

Question: *What kind of neighborhood infrastructure needs to be implemented to create a safer living environment?*

Public Comments:

- Sidewalks
- Road improvement
- Lighting and signage
- Water, sewer and fire hydrants
- Safe, affordable housing (hurricane ready)
- Access to public safety, i.e. emergency services
- Underground utilities
- Youth activities
- After-school activities
- Parks (pickleball, basketball, etc.)
- Access to regularly scheduled transportation to the Regional Sports Complex and local parks
- Shuttle service to groceries, public facilities, etc. for citizens without transportation
- Proactively reviewing and assessing impact of upcoming changes to school start times
- Upgraded ADA standards

Question: *What types of specific projects would you like to see within the proposed funding categories?*

Public Infrastructure

Public Comments:

- ADA compliance in public restrooms
- Renewable energy for county owned facilities
- Roads
- Expand utilities to allow for fire hydrants
- Access to internet for LMI areas in Keystone
- Interlocal agreements for broader access to continuing education options

Housing Rehab

Public Comments:

- ADA compliance
- Housing counseling
- Access to housing-related programs

The attendees were asked to anonymously rank the two proposed funding categories. Unanimously public infrastructure was ranked highest.

Megan Covey reviewed the dates and locations for the remaining public comment meetings (see below) and closed the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

The public comment period is open from June 11 through June 10, 2024. Copies of the draft 2024-2025 Annual Action Plan are available online at claycountygov.com on the Economic and Development page or at the following locations through July 10, 2024:

- Fleming Island Library – 1895 Town Center Blvd. Fleming Island, FL
- Green Cove Springs Library – 403 Ferris St., Green Cove Springs, FL
- Keystone Heights Library – 175 Oriole Ave., Keystone Heights, FL
- Middleburg-Clay Hill Library – 2245 Aster Ave., Middleburg, FL
- Orange Park Library – 2054 Plainfield Ave., Orange Park, FL

Comments can be submitted online or in person by attending one of the remaining meetings:

- Tuesday, June 18, Middleburg-Clay Hill Library, 2245 Aster Ave., Middleburg, FL at 6:00 p.m.
- Thursday, June 27, Orange Park Library, 2054 Plainfield Ave., Orange Park, FL at 6:00 p.m.