

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	October 5, 2020
Action Required:	Report
Presenter:	Kaki Dimock, Director, Human Services Mary Coleman, Executive Director, City of Promise
Staff Contacts:	Kaki Dimock, Human Services
Title:	City of Promise Update

Background:

Founded in 2012 as a City Council initiative, City of Promise is a data-driven, neighborhood-based, community-supported initiative to increase academic achievement and empowerment in Charlottesville's 10th & Page/Westhaven and Starr Hill neighborhoods.

City of Promise has been supported by the Department of Human Services, in coordination with ReadyKids, from its inception. The department hired and supported a full-time program director - first, Sarad Davenport and, then, Denise Johnson – using appropriations from the general fund. In 2017, the City of Promise Advisory Board determined that the most sustainable course of action for the program was to pursue an I.R.S. 501(c)3 designation as a nonprofit and move towards independence. City of Promise is now duly incorporated in the State of Virginia and has achieved official nonprofit status from the I.R.S. The City of Promise continues to operate out of a city-owned building on Page Street and receives funding support from the city. On June 3, 2019, city council approved the transfer of \$81,837 to City of Promise for FY20 and agreed to decrease this amount per year by 25% until the amount is zero. City of Promise funding for FY21 was approved as part of the Department of Human Services budget.

Discussion:

City of Promise seeks to meet its mission through several programs:

- Promise Baby Academy – 8 week educational support focused on improving parenting skills for parents of toddlers and infants
- Pathway Coaching – individualized academic coaching paired with community-based resources designed to address non-school family needs
- Learning Centers – quiet, supported community spots for virtual learners to get academic work completed
- Garden – young people help cultivate and harvest fresh produce, cooking classes
- Adult Empowerment – periodic support and educational groups including budgeting, self-care, career planning, etc.
- Field trips, community meals and other events

In 2019, City of Promise hosted 133 group events, 249 neighbors joined the program, and 75 volunteers supported the organization. The program is engaged in a formal evaluation of its impact.

Students enrolled in City of Promise have made significant gains in math and reading:

- There was a 10% increase in math S.O.L. pass rates over the last 5 years with City of Promise students outperforming black students as a group by 21%.
- There was a 24% increase in reading S.O.L. pass rates over the last 5 years with City of Promise students outperforming black students as a groups by 27%.

Community Engagement:

City of Promise is a community-based program, historically supported by the city, with an Advisory Board largely made up of community members.

Alignment with City Council’s Vision and Strategic Plan:

City of Promise advances the City of Charlottesville’s Strategic Plan Goal #1 of enhancing the self sufficiency of our residents. City of Promise specifically works on Objective 1.1: To prepare students for academic and vocational success.

Budgetary Impact:

N/A

Recommendation:

N/A

Alternatives:

N/A

Attachments:

