

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS** of the City of New Haven to accept the AARP Community Challenge Flagship Grant for Public Places for FY 23 in the amount of \$20,000.00 to aid in creating vibrant public places for our seniors to enjoy with an emphasis on installing accessible seating.

Submitted by: Tomi Veale, Director of Elderly Services and Lorena Mitchell, Coordinator for Community Mental Health Initiatives

REPORT: 1629-16

ADVICE: Approve.

BACKGROUND

The Departments of Elderly Services and Community Resilience have applied for the AARP Community Challenge Flagship Grant for Public Places for Fiscal Year 2023 in which the funding, awarded the City of New Haven, Elderly Services and Community Resilience Department \$20,000.00 in the form of a grant will allow for the installation of accessible outdoor seating at the three senior centers and community parks. The project will have a primary focus on the three New Haven Senior Centers located at 26 Atwater Street, 197 Dixwell Avenue, 411 Townsend Avenue and nearby green spaces.

Funds will be used to: benefit seniors and older residents across New Haven by enhancing the three Senior Center facilities and nearby community parks with the installation of ADA accessible seating. In addition to serving our aging population, these senior centers serve a racially, ethnically, and economically diverse group of residents; survey areas of installation for accessible seating and contract with an ADA Specialist Contractor; support comprehensive research that accessible outdoor seating for senior citizens, people with disabilities, and all city residents can improve the quality, safety, and vibrancy of public spaces; partner and collaborate with local government agencies, community-based organizations, healthcare settings, residents, and other stakeholders.

The Departments of Elderly Services and Community Resilience is seeking the Board of Alders to authorize the Mayor to accept these funds, should they be granted and, authorize the Elderly Services and Community Resilience Departments to manage the activity of this grant by tracking and monitoring services that will aid in the timely installation of accessible seating in our community.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

In accordance with Title I, Article XIII, Section 2(A) of the New Haven Code of Ordinances states, **"Every Ordinance or Resolution of the Board of Alders relating to the location and use of any street, bridge, boulevard, esplanade, square, park, playground, playfield, aviation field, parking space, public building, the facilities or terminals of any public utility, or the establishment or change in the boundaries of or regulations concerning zoning, shall be at once referred to the City Planning Commission and final action shall not be taken on any such Ordinance or Resolution until the commission shall have reported thereon, provided that the Board of Alders may establish by ordinance a period of not less than sixty (60) Days within which the commission shall file its report with the City Clerk and if no report is filed**

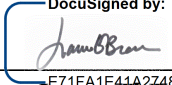
within such period the approval of the commission shall be presumed.” Accordingly, the Board of Alders seeks guidance regarding the proposed amendment. Accessible seating will benefit our communities by providing accessible outdoor community spaces at Senior Centers and nearby community parks to decrease social isolation among senior citizens and build more connections between these community facilities and their surrounding neighborhoods and improving the built environment of Senior Center facilities and nearby community parks to create safe public spaces, which research shows may be associated with better physical and mental health for residents.

ADVICE

The proposal is aligned with the City’s Comprehensive Plan because it:

- Promotes outdoor recreation
- Improves Park and Community Center infrastructure
- Improves accessibility of public spaces

ADOPTED: March 15, 2023
Leslie Radcliffe
Chair

ATTEST:  March 20, 2023 | 2:15 PM EDT
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Laura E Brown
Executive Director, City Plan Department