

Gallup to get \$1 million

Written by By Beth Blakeman Associate Editor
Friday, 02 October 2020 04:42



Infrastructure improvements coming to West Logan Avenue

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Gallup is about to receive a million dollars for a street and drainage improvement project on West Logan Avenue between Ninth Street and Seventh Street.

The application, which identifies the project as *West Logan Avenue (6th to 9th St.) Street & Drainage Project*, will not include improvements to Sixth Street at this time. Funding is currently available to complete two of the three blocks, starting from Ninth Street and moving east to Seventh Street at a cost of just over \$1.27 million.

The infrastructure funding is part of the state's investment in Community Development Block Grants in municipal and county governments.

New Mexico Lt. Gov. Howie Morales told the *Gallup Sun* Sept. 23 that the award was made by the Community Development Council through the Dept. of Finance and Administration using state taxes and federal dollars.

These funds have been made available for years for a variety of infrastructure projects. This year, however, is different.

"They're for essential projects that will help during the COVID pandemic to revitalize communities," Morales stated.

He explained that while many presentations are given, not every project gets funded through CDBG. Many that got awarded this year may not have been recipients in 2019.

One of the things that helps tip the scales toward an application win, is when the presentation demonstrates how the dollars received can be leveraged into added dollars for the community in question.

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“Can other dollars be accessed to double or triple those funds?” Morales asked.

The West Logan Avenue Street and Drainage Project applied for \$1 million with matching funds of \$100,000, plus over \$170,000 in leveraging and construction management.

How will Gallup be helped by these funds?

According to the presentation, 27 households are located in the project area in the historic Chihuahueta Neighborhood near downtown Gallup.

“This project can be the catalyst for community revitalization, redevelopment through blight elimination and reinvestment, as prioritized in the City’s Growth Management Plan. This project has critical priority for the health, safety, and welfare of the community,” the application stated.

In particular it will:

- Improve walkability and accessibility by increasing mobility and creating safe routes
- Improve utilities and infrastructure for safe access to water, wastewater, and fire suppression
- Improve stormwater drainage systems to prevent flooding or the formation of standing water that has potential health risks, diseases, and infestations
- Improve and uplift bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Proactively replace waterlines to prevent future line failures and breaks

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- Increase sense of place, pride, and property values
- Catalyze local investment and efforts to improve neighborhoods and reduce blight
- Increase economic vitality through property improvement projects

Locations around the state like Anthony, Clovis, Silver City and Socorro, as well as counties including Luna, Mora, and San Miguel are eligible for these funds, where cities such as Albuquerque, Farmington and Santa Fe are considered “entitlement” cities which get funding from the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development.

Tribes and pueblos also receive funds directly from HUD.

The timeline for completion of the West Logan Avenue project is 24 months.

A LITTLE SOMETHING MORE

More funds are on the way, this time from the CARES Act to help with rental assistance and housing.

Morales said nearly \$13 million went to the Mortgage Finance Authority.

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He described how it will work.

“MFA will work with the Council of Governments and other local partners to identify the need for rental assistance in local communities,” he said. “MFA will reach out through regional partners [and] COGs to make communities aware of the dollars.”

This information will appear in print, social media and on radio in cooperation with lenders.

Morales expects the money to become available by the end of October.

By Beth Blakeman
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