

## Excess federal grant funds could go to Childhaven, Four Corners Foundation

By Greg Yee *The Daily Times Farmington Daily Times*  
Updated:

Daily-Times.com

FARMINGTON — Farmington City Council voted Tuesday evening to place funding for Childhaven and the Four Corners Foundation on a future meeting agenda for final consideration.

Childhaven could receive about \$61,000 out of about \$99,000 in leftover 2012 federal grant money to be used toward a remodel project. The Four Corners Foundation could receive the rest of the funds to apply toward A Path Home, a multi-phase housing project aimed at assisting the homeless.

Childhaven is a Farmington-based nonprofit that shelters and assists abused children. The Four Corners Foundation aims to address a variety of social issues in San Juan County.

"Every one of you, in my book, is a hometown hero," said Councilwoman Mary Fischer, who directed Tuesday evening's meeting in the absence of Mayor Tommy Roberts and Mayor Pro Tem Dan Darnell. "I take my hat off to you."

What to do with the leftover Community Development Block Grant funds was originally brought to council on March 26, but discussion was tabled because Councilman Jason Sandel was absent, according to the meeting minutes.

"At our shelter building, we have two needs," said Erin Hourihan, Childhaven's executive director in a phone interview before Tuesday's meeting. "One of our immediate needs is in our kitchen area. Tiles need to be replaced. It's almost a 20-year-old facility."

Childhaven applied for and received \$50,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds in 2011, Hourihan said.

"It funded about half of a residential wing project to build more single rooms," she said.

A proposed remodel of the aging facility's kitchen and children/toddler playrooms will cost about \$61,000, Hourihan said.

The building is owned by the city and leased by Childhaven, she said. The nonprofit organization is responsible for maintenance.

"On average, we have 160 or more children," Hourihan said. "There is an urgency to this project because existing conditions pose a threat to the health and well-being of the children. We are primarily funded through New Mexico state funds. It provides close to 80 percent of the funding for nights of care. We also do apply to the county indigent fund, which operates at a loss. We have United Way funding, city funding ... those funds just barely make it for our operational costs."

If the repairs are not made, state inspectors could shut down Childhaven's kitchen area, she said.

Four Corners Foundation's executive director, Karen Broten, said the grant funding will help complete A

Path Home, a master-planned development for emergency and transitional housing development for the homeless and homeless families.

The need for additional shelter space, especially for homeless families, has never been greater, she said.

"PATH has been filled to capacity every day this month and for most days in the recent months," Broten said. "Twelve people have been turned away this week, including two families."

The project's total cost is \$3 million, she said.

In total, eight organizations or individuals applied for the Community Development Grant funding.

Fischer encouraged those who did not receive funding to speak to Mary Holton, the city's Community Development Department director, or to Elizabeth Isenberg, the city's government relations coordinator, to see if the city can assist in another way.

*Greg Yee can be reached at [gyee@daily-times.com](mailto:gyee@daily-times.com); 505-564-4606. Follow him on Twitter [@GYeeDT](https://twitter.com/GYeeDT).*