



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
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TO: Barbara Levin Bergman, Chair
Ways & Means Committee

THROUGH: Robert E. Guenzel
County Administrator

FROM: Mary Jo Callan, Director
Office of Community Development

DATE: July 2, 2008

SUBJECT: 2009-2012 Washtenaw Urban County Agreements

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

It is requested that the Board pass a resolution approving the administration of the Washtenaw Urban County Community Development Block Grant and Home Investment Partnerships Program funding for the third qualification period, which begins on July 1, 2009 and ends on June 30, 2012. In addition, the Office of Community Development requests that the Board authorize the County Administrator to sign Cooperation Agreements for this period with the following one new jurisdiction that has formally expressed their wish to join the Washtenaw Urban County: The City of Ann Arbor. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires that this action be taken one year prior to the start of the new qualification period, which begins in July of 2009.

BACKGROUND:

In 2001, the County investigated how to receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding for affordable housing and community development projects from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD.) The County decided to take a leadership role in developing a HUD Urban County designation for those programs. The County saw this as a way to develop the resources of these communities without increasing taxes.

The County could only obtain this designation by inviting all jurisdictions within the County to participate in a partnership to receive these funds. So, the County went through an extensive process of meetings and presentations across the County to encourage all jurisdictions to participate, so that lower-income households in the new Urban County could benefit from the programs and projects made possible by the new Urban County's receipt of CDBG and HOME funding. At the end of this process, the following seven jurisdictions elected to join the Urban County: Ypsilanti Township, Salem

Township, Ann Arbor Township, Superior Township, Northfield Township, Pittsfield Township, and Bridgewater Township.

Consequently, in 2002, the Board approved the County's administration and support of the Washtenaw Urban County for the first qualification period, which began July 1, 2003 and which ended on June 30, 2006. In 2005, the following three jurisdictions elected to join the Urban County: The City of Ypsilanti, Scio Township, and York Township. Consequently, in 2005, the Board approved the County's administration and support of the Washtenaw Urban County for the second qualification period, which began on July 1, 2006 and which will end on June 30, 2009.

During the period July 1, 2006 - April 30, 2009, the jurisdictions in the Washtenaw Urban County have elected to use these CDBG and HOME Program grants to serve their communities in the following ways:

- rehabilitate owner-occupied housing stock;
- rehabilitate multi-family rental housing;
- provide home repair and chore services to older adults;
- provide temporary childcare scholarships to lower-income parents
- in-home meal delivery to homebound residents;
- construct bike paths and sidewalks in predominantly lower-income areas;
- improve community and senior centers in lower-income areas;
- provide down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers;
- support the acquisition, rehabilitation, and re-sell of substandard or rental housing;
- advocacy for students with disabilities to obtain necessary support in school;
- financial management services for persons w/ disabilities & older adults;
- subsidize transportation for lower-income residents in areas outside of AATA bus routes;
- provide dental services to lower-income residents without health insurance

DISCUSSION:

Every three years, the County is required by HUD to invite all of the remaining jurisdictions in the County to participate in the Urban County and to confirm that the current members will participate for the next qualification period. Since this must be completed one year in advance of the end of the current qualification period, the Office of Community Development began this process in January of 2008. Letters of invitation were sent to all current members of the Urban County and all other jurisdictions of the Urban County on January 7th, 2008 that requested a response to these invitations by February 28th, 2008. Presentations and meetings were scheduled with all jurisdictions that indicated an interest in joining the Urban County during the months of February, March, and April of 2008.

As of the date of the writing of this memorandum, the current ten Urban County members have indicated that they wish to remain in the Urban County for the new qualification period and have passed Board resolutions in support. Since these jurisdictions signed cooperation agreements that automatically renew unless they choose to leave the Urban County, HUD requires only that the County submit those supporting resolutions, along with a legal opinion from Corporation Counsel that the cooperation agreements remain legal, and a supporting resolution of its own to continue the operation of the current Urban County.

In addition to the current ten members, the City of Ann Arbor passed a resolution on April 7, 2008 to participate in the Urban County for the next qualification period beginning July 1, 2009. The Chief Elected Official of the City has also signed the cooperation agreement, which must be signed by the County and sent to HUD, along with a supporting resolution from the County and the City of Ann Arbor. After HUD receives these documents, they will begin the process of adding this new jurisdiction to the County CDBG and HOME allocations for the 2009 program year.

During the next year, the Office of Community Development will begin meeting with officials from the City of Ann Arbor to collect information about the types of projects that they would like to complete using CDBG and HOME funding. In addition, the Office will collect Census and other data to amend the 2008-2013 CDBG/HOME Consolidated Plan to include data on the City, which is the basis for each of the annual plans that the Office prepares for HUD. At this time, the Office asks that the Board support the expansion of the Urban County to include the City of Ann Arbor and authorize the County Administrator's signature on the new cooperation agreement.

The Board of Commissioners is asked to act on this resolution at Ways and Means and the full Board meeting on July 2, 2008, as the new cooperation agreements and resolutions are due to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development by July 7, 2008.

IMPACT ON HUMAN RESOURCES:

None

IMPACT ON BUDGET:

There will be no impact on the budget at this time, but the CDBG and HOME grants may increase for the 2009 program year.

IMPACT ON INDIRECT COSTS:

There will be no impact on the indirect costs at this time, but the CDBG and HOME grants may increase for the 2009 program year, which may affect indirect costs.

IMPACT ON OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS OR AGENCIES:

Additional funding will be available to local nonprofit housing and community development providers to develop affordable housing for lower-income neighborhoods and households. In addition, the County will work with the Urban County jurisdictions to identify other community development projects that will encourage community revitalization and ensure the safety of residents. The County will continue to work with local Community Housing Development Organizations, nonprofit human service providers, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and other entities to encourage the successful development and completion of these projects.

Any potential increase in the HOME allocation will subsequently increase the HOME-match requirement, since 25% of all project spending must be matched by the County. In the past, this match has come from supportive services to residents of HOME-assisted units, Habitat for Humanity sweat equity, donated services and materials, and cash match from the County Housing Contingency fund.

CONFORMITY TO COUNTY POLICIES:

This action conforms to all appropriate County policies.

ATTACHMENTS:

Cooperative agreement with the City of Ann Arbor

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE WASHTENAW URBAN COUNTY HOME AND CDBG GRANTS FOR THE 2009-2012 QUALIFICATION PERIOD AND TO AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO SIGN A COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR

WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

July 2, 2008

WHEREAS the Washtenaw Urban County was established in 2003 between Washtenaw County and the following seven jurisdictions: Ypsilanti Township, Salem Township, Superior Township, Northfield Township, Bridgewater Township, Pittsfield Township, and Ann Arbor Township; and

WHEREAS the original seven jurisdictions of the Urban County initially agreed to participate for the first qualification period from July 1, 2003 - June 30, 2006;

WHEREAS all of the original seven jurisdictions passed resolutions in support of continuing their participation in the Urban County for the second qualification period from July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2009;

WHEREAS three new jurisdictions, the City of Ypsilanti, Scio Township, and York Township passed resolutions and signed cooperation agreements with the County to participate in the Urban County for the second qualification period from July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2009;

WHEREAS, Washtenaw County has invited all units of government within its boundaries to participate in the Urban County, in order to realize the benefits of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program funding that the Urban County receives from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires that the governing body of each participating jurisdiction consider and make known its decision by resolution whether to be included in (or excluded from) the Washtenaw Urban County; and

WHEREAS, each of the participants in the Urban County are represented by the chief elected official of that jurisdiction or their formal designee on the Urban County Executive Committee;

WHEREAS all of the current ten member jurisdictions have passed resolutions in support of continuing their participation in the Urban County for the third qualification period from July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2012;

WHEREAS one new jurisdiction, the City of Ann Arbor has passed a resolution and signed a cooperation agreement with the County to participate in the Urban County for the period of July 1, 2009- June 30, 2012; and

WHEREAS this matter has been reviewed by the Office of Community Development, the current ten members of the Urban County, the City of Ann Arbor Mayor's Office, the City of Ann Arbor Attorney's Office, County Administration, the Finance Department, Human Resources, Corporation Counsel and the Washtenaw County Ways and Means Committee;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the administration of the Washtenaw Urban County for the 2009-2012 qualification period.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the County Administrator to sign a cooperation agreement with the City of Ann Arbor, as on file with the County Clerk.