



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
220 NORTH MAIN STREET, P.O. BOX 8645  
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48107-8645  
(734) 222-6850  
FAX (734) 222-6715

TO: Sue Shink, Chair  
Board of Commissioners

THROUGH: Gregory Dill  
County Administrator

FROM: Teresa Gillotti, Director  
Office of Community & Economic Development

DATE: Wednesday, June 1, 2022

SUBJECT: Approval for New Human Services Partnership safety net grant  
funding allocation

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:**

It is requested that the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners approve the final recommendation of award recipients made by County Administration for RFP 8311, "Human Services Partnership 2022 Safety Net Grants Program".

**BACKGROUND:**

In 2021, the Washtenaw Coordinated Funding Partnership ended. In 2022, Washtenaw County, the City of Ann Arbor and the Washtenaw Urban County created the New Human Services Partnership to replace Washtenaw Coordinated Funding.

The Washtenaw County and City of Ann Arbor Leadership team have been integral to the development of the New Human Services Partnership, which is working to integrate equity throughout the process, and shift the focus of human services funding to address issues of poverty, racism and trauma as the root cause of institutional inequities.

As a reminder, the overall goals of this funding program include:

- Desire to make impact and move the needle for those facing institutional inequities, while also supporting the safety net
- Incorporate Equity throughout the process including •
  - Accessibility to the application process
  - Community-inclusive review process
  - Equity review of applicants prior to award / contracting
  - Equity in service delivery
- Focus on addressing institutional racism, poverty, and trauma as root causes of institutional inequity

- Redevelop strategic framework for investing resources to be focused on an Equitable grant making and process while achieving high impact outcomes
  - Outcomes/goals co-created with experts and community
  - Incorporate lessons learned from COVID-19 response and previous COFU model
  - Accessibility for grantees – allow for under-represented, new, or growing groups to access funding
  - Ease of process – for applicants and staff
  - Flexibility in funding/programming to allow for pivots and learning, including emerging needs
- Partnership continues to allow for shared communication, links to community partners, ongoing need, support in place, etc.

The New Human Services Partnership will be adding an enhanced evaluation and equity assessment component. A subset of the Leadership team reviewed proposals from evaluators and selected the University of Michigan School of Social Work Program Evaluation Group. The U of M Program Evaluation Group (PEG) will help each grantee conduct an equity self-assessment and will provide feedback and other forms of support to help grantees take steps to create practices that promote equity, such as developing board members and staff that represent the communities being served. All New Human Services Partnership grantees will receive intentional support that allows them to build capacity so that they can sustain the equitable practices they start during the grant period. Additionally, grantees will need to make progress on the DEI goals set in this action plan and improve the equity practices of the organization in order to continue being funded throughout the five-year funding period. This accountability measure helps prevent grantees from neglecting their identified areas of growth and helps ensure that human services in Washtenaw County continually improve at promoting equity.

In addition to the support around equity and DEI, the U of M Program Evaluation Group will be working with all grantees around data collection, outcome creation and regular reporting on data, metrics and evaluations. PEG will also be able to provide capacity building to agencies related to data collection and reporting as well.

Detailed information on the equity framework and overall timeline can be found on the webpage here: <https://www.washtenaw.org/3422/New-Human-Services-Partnership-Planning>

As part of the process, three different funding rounds are planned for 2022:

<b>Funding Round</b>	<b>Amounts and duration</b>	<b>Timing</b>
<b>Safety Net Grants</b>	5-year commitments in the range of \$200,000-300,000 per grantee per year	Current funding round
<b>Mini-grants</b>	1-year grants to support trying new ideas, and/or supporting newer agencies up to \$40,000	Summer
<b>High-Impact grants</b>	5-year commitments with an expectation of positive outcomes showing real change for households served. Funding at \$200,000-300,000 per grantee per year	Fall/winter

Several funding sources have been identified for the overall New Human Services Partnership including the following:

- Washtenaw County General Fund (annual) - \$1,015,000
- City of Ann Arbor General Fund (annual) - \$1,207,529
- City of Ann Arbor American Rescue Plan Funds (one-time) - \$1,682,630
- Washtenaw Urban County (annual)– 15% of Annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (estimated at \$316,385)
- Washtenaw Urban County Community Development Block COVID grant (CDBG-CV) one-time - \$608,347

Additional funding requests are pending, so as additional funding comes available, additional grants can be provided. OCED is coordinating with the County and City departments related to the balancing some of the more unique funding sources such as ARPA, including eligibility and reporting. Combined, the current available funding for the New Human Services Partnership for 2022 is \$2,871,696. The funding will be distributed among the funding rounds in the following ways:

2022 Annual budget	Safety Net grants	Mini-grants	High Impact grants
<b>Percentage of budget</b>	59%	12%	29%
<b>\$2,871,696.73</b>	\$1,694,301.07	\$344,603.61	\$832,792.05

### Safety Net Funding Round

The first of the three funding rounds is intended to provide operating support to agencies delivering safety net services broadly to the county and/or to fill in any gaps to demographic groups or geographies in the four safety net services areas defined by our leadership team:

1. **Emergency Food System:** These supports can include:
  - Food pantries
  - Home delivered meals
  - Mass food distribution (food warehouse and supply chain for emergency food system)
  
2. **Housing and Homelessness:** These supports should come from service providers of
  - Permanent supportive housing (PSH) services, Rapid Rehousing and/or
  - Shelter or other short term and transitional housing, with emphasis on supporting individuals and families with supports to improve housing stability, including case management
  
3. **Health and Basic Medical Needs :** These supports should come from service providers providing:
  - Payment for medical bills for uninsured or underinsured and low-income medical providers
  - Low-income Health care providers or clinics providing dental, medical, mental health care
  - Medical case management services (supporting insurance applicants, WIC, MIHP, etc)
  
4. **Childcare:**
  - Childcare scholarships for low-income households and/or childcare provision for low-income households

The Request for Proposals was released on March 27, 2022. The Request for Proposals were due on April 25, 2022, and we received thirty-four (34) submissions. Thirty-one (31) were eligible for review with total requests over \$8 million.

- 10 applications in Emergency Food System
- 9 applications in Housing and Homelessness
- 8 applications in Health and Basic Medical Needs
- 4 applications in Childcare

During this application period OCED recruited and trained members of the community to review applications and provide feedback on which applicants should be awarded funding. Community reviewers were recruited through various channels including existing elected officials, community board members and residents. The goal of the recruitment was to provide broad demographic and geographic representation. The outreach resulted in a diverse mix of reviewers:

- 10 residents of color, 6 identifying as white
- Age ranges:
  - o 36-45 - 3
  - o 46-55 -7
  - o 56-65 - 4
  - o Over 65 – 2
- Geography
  - o Ann Arbor – 8
  - o Ypsilanti – 5
  - o Milan – 1
  - o Pittsfield – 1
  - o Gregory – 1
- Gender – 15 identify as women and 1 as male
- Income
  - o <\$50,000 annually – 3
  - o Between \$50,000-100,000 - 5
  - o >\$100,000 – 8

OCED staff reviewed the proposals for basic eligibility including financial risk; however, OCED staff did not score the proposals. OCED staff facilitated the community review process, but the final recommendations were made by a diverse group from throughout the County who represented different perspectives and provided valuable context and personal experiences about the applicants. Standardized evaluations and lived experiences were combined in a robust dialogue that covered nuanced ways to promote equity. For example, the community reviewers discussed how certain agencies demonstrated a clear understanding of how their work is equitable and where the agency has room for improvement, while other agencies used buzzwords connected to equity-work without showing a meaningful understanding of how to promote equity. Additionally, community reviewers discussed grant applications in ways that centered equity. Rather than discussing which applications were the best written, the community review conversation focused on which agencies indicated that they will best provide essential services to bolster the safety net for residents who have less access to opportunity and are in the most need. Centering equity within the community review process helped ensure that the final funding recommendations will lead to services that address existing inequities.

All reviewers participated in training, which included review of the New Human Services Partnership, the Safety Net Funding Round, the scoring rubric and training on the biases reviewers can bring to scoring. The reviewers then scored approximately 7 applications, with each application receiving about 4 individual reviews. Scores were tallied, and then two discussion sessions held to carefully deliberate on the recommendations. The reviewers were incredibly thoughtful in their discussion and consideration, working to bring in equity considerations as well as local knowledge. We want to express our sincere thanks and appreciation for their commitment to this process. The community review process ran from April 28 through May 9, 2022, culminating in recommendations for seven agencies to receive safety net grants. Those recommendations follow in the section below.

**DISCUSSION:**

RFP 8311 is designed to fund human service agencies that provide essential safety net services in Washtenaw County focused on four programmatic areas. The program areas include: the emergency food system, housing and homelessness, health and basic medical needs, and childcare for low-income households. Agencies that provide services related to these areas were eligible to apply, and seven applicants are recommended for funding through the community review process.

The community review process resulted in two tiers of recommendations based on how much funding is currently available. The list below is the first tier of agencies recommended to receive the current funding available. Should additional funds become available, the community reviewers provided a second tier of recommendations. Please note that there are no specific rankings in the second tier.

**Tier one recommendations**

Agency (in alphabetical order)	Safety Net Service Area	Funding Requested	Annual Funding Recommendation	Safety Net Grant Funding (5 years)
Child Care Network	Childcare	\$300,000	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Corner Health Center	Medical/Health	\$264,000	\$244,301*	\$1,221,505
Food Gatherers	Emergency Food	\$300,000	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Michigan Ability Partners	Housing/ Homelessness	\$296,754.49	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Packard Health	Medical/Health	\$280,000	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Shelter Association	Housing/ Homelessness	\$300,000	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels	Emergency Food	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$1,000,000
<b>Totals</b>		<b>1,940,754.49</b>	<b>\$1,694,301</b>	<b>\$8,471,505</b>

\* Note if additional funding is available, the Community Reviewers recommend increasing this grant to \$250,000

## Tier Two Recommendations

Organization Name	Safety Net Program Area	Safety Net Grant Funding (Annual)	Safety Net Grant Funding (5 years)
Foundations Preschool of Washtenaw County	Childcare	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Avalon Housing, Inc.	Housing/Homelessness	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Washtenaw Health Plan	Medical/Health	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County	Food	\$250,000	\$1,250,000
Total		\$1,000,000	\$5,000,000

### **OPPORTUNITY INDEX:**

The process for soliciting and selecting agencies to fund for the New Human Services Partnership considered the information in the opportunity index and the values behind its creation. The opportunity index is particularly important to this funding round because the New Human Services Partnership wants to address inequity. Providing essential services to areas identified as low opportunity is an impactful way to accomplish this goal. RFP 8311 framed the need to address racism, poverty, and trauma as root causes of inequity and contained questions for applicants specifically citing the opportunity index. All applicants were asked to “Please review the Opportunity Index, and explain how that data and your own experience impact how you deliver services to the community.” Applicants were evaluated based on how they responded to this question and how they articulated their practices that promote equity throughout the application.

The opportunity index was also used to inform the community review process. Community reviewers were broadly representative of the community encapsulating many kinds of diversity such as geographic, racial, socio-economic, and age diversity. Community reviewers received training which included a discussion of the opportunity index. Additionally, final decisions were made in a large group discussion format where a major consideration for decision making was what impact applicants will have in low opportunity areas. Community reviewers participated in a robust discussion about applicants’ ability to support low opportunity areas and applicants’ understanding of equity beyond superficial concepts. This approach helped the selection process make decisions that will benefit current low opportunity areas as identified by the opportunity index.

### **IMPACT ON HUMAN RESOURCES:**

None.

### **IMPACT ON BUDGET:**

The Board of Commissioners has allocated \$1,015,000 annually for Coordinated Funding program operations which is included in the 2022-2025 County Quadrennial Budget.

### **IMPACT ON FACILITIES:**

None.

### **IMPACT ON TECHNOLOGY**

None.

### **IMPACT ON EQUITY:**

The New Human Services Partnership is designed with equity at its core which is exemplified by the goals of addressing racism, poverty, and trauma and making the application process more accessible

and inclusive. For the 5-year safety net grants, the application questions in RFP 8311 and the community review process promote equity in a variety of ways. RFP 8311 asked applicants to discuss their organization's equity practices, their understanding of the opportunity index, and the populations their services benefit. Strong applications indicated a clear understanding and effective implementation of equity practices in serving low opportunity areas and priority populations, including the 48197/98 zip codes, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, people of color) communities, and low-income residents.

Additionally, the funding is generally targeted to support residents at or below the poverty line and the priority populations identified in RFP 8311. The grantees will be required to undergo an equity self-assessment and action plan process, aided by the U of M Program Evaluation Group. To maintain funding, grantees are expected to improve the equity practices of their organization by making steady progress on the DEI goals identified by the evaluation team. This process will help grantees gain support and extra capacity around equity during their grant period.

**IMPACT ON INDIRECT COSTS:**

None.

**IMPACT ON OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS OR OUTSIDE AGENCIES:**

The leadership team of the New Human Services Partnership includes members of the County Board of Commissioners, Ann Arbor City Council, Washtenaw County Administration, Washtenaw County Racial Equity Office, Ann Arbor Community Services, and is aided by OCED staff throughout the decision-making and implementation process. OCED staff will provide contract oversight and technical assistance for grantees, and ensure funds are disbursed correctly and within County policies and procedures.

**CONFORMITY TO COUNTY POLICIES:**

The requested Board action conforms with all applicable County policies.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Resolution
- Attached summary