

## COORDINATED FUNDING: Successful Outcomes

SEPT 2012

Part of the original intent of the Coordinated Funding partnership was to identify areas of improvement within each partner's existing funding process in order to make more efficient the delivery of funding to nonprofit agencies in Washtenaw County. Below are some of the key initial outcomes this new process has yielded.

- ✓ Identification of agency capacity concerns
  - The RFQ process allowed all funders to conduct a singular process by which to determine an agency's overall capacity to manage finances and operations. Through this review, funders were able to intervene with troubled agencies collectively and before making additional community investment(s).
- ✓ Single program description & program budget
  - Historically, agencies would have to submit a program description and program budget for each of the various funding sources, even if the funding awarded all supported the same program. This streamlined process allows funders to look at a program as a whole, instead of the piece that their funding supports.
- ✓ Reduced number of contracts
  - Almost all most agencies have fewer overall contracts due to the administrative assignment of funding sources. Additionally, City and County general funding is now represented by a single contract, further reducing the public sector administrative burden on agencies.
- ✓ No required Board Resolution
  - The City has for many years required agencies to pass a board resolution accepting the funding and assigning signatories prior to the execution of their grant agreement. This often created delays in payments due to board of directors meeting schedules and summer vacations. This change reduced the delay in payment for agencies funded by the public sector. Through the RFQ submission requirements, all agencies had to have signature/approval of the Board Chair in order to enter the Coordinated Funding process.



United Way  
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- ✓ Single reporting procedure and timeline
  - Similar to the program description and budget improvements, agencies now only submit a single report via communitygrants.org that represents their entire program, rather than just the piece funded by a particular funder.
- ✓ Auto-disbursement of payments regardless of funder
  - Thanks to the feedback from agencies, as well as from the private sector partners in Coordinated Funding, all three public sector funders have moved to an auto-disbursement payment model. This change – away from a reimbursement model – provides agencies with increased financial and cash flow stability during the grant year.
- ✓ Grantee Feedback Mechanism
  - Grantees have, for the first time, had a formal opportunity to provide the funders with feedback about their experiences with the new funding model. This feedback was reviewed and incorporated into our most recent funding rounds –Capacity Building – in the fall of 2011 and 2012. Agencies – both funded and unfunded – will have an additional opportunity to give feedback through the formal evaluation process.
- ✓ Volunteer Reviewer Feedback Mechanism
  - Similarly, the policy-level and volunteer reviewers have also been given a formal opportunity to provide feedback about Coordinated Funding that will inform our future funding processes.
- ✓ Enhanced Communication Between Funders & Increased Understanding of Needs
  - Coordinated Funding staff meet regularly to discuss how to improve the funding process for nonprofits, how to maximize impacts, and how to address newly identified and emerging needs in the community. While staff time has not necessarily been reduced through Coordinated Funding, systems thinking – and acting – have definitely improved. In addition to staff, an oversight board meets regularly to examine the progress of the model, and its intended and unintended consequences.

