

To: Ann Arbor City Council & Mayor Hieftje
From: Housing & Human Services Advisory Board
CC: Mary Jo Callan, Director, Office of Community Development
Date: May 16, 2010
Subject: Human Services Funding & 2012 City Budget

The Office of Community Development has submitted its 2011-2013 coordinated funding recommendations for your consideration. The HHSAB would like to express its strong support for these recommendations, including a call for continued stable funding. The HHSAB also recognizes that the current fiscal climate has placed a severe strain on local budgets, including our own in Ann Arbor, and wishes to express its appreciation for the way in which the City has recognized housing and human services as a priority and a value embraced by this community by commitment of general fund spending on vital programs for promoting housing and economic self-sufficiency for the most needy of our citizens.

Ann Arbor's funding commitment has always been based on recognition that funding of supportive housing and human services is an efficient use of scarce resources that provide a crucial safety net for residents who are most vulnerable in difficult economic times:

- Helps prevent evictions and mortgage foreclosures for Ann Arbor residents, keeping residents in their homes and providing the personal and family stability that is essential to keep people in their jobs and keep children in their schools
- Provides for medical care and treatment for those that have lost or can't afford health care insurance coverage, preventing conditions from getting more serious or more expensive for families and health care providers
- Provides supportive housing and substance abuse and mental health support services that enable residents to recover or stabilize their condition, obtain work, and avoid expensive stays in jail or psychiatric facilities and minimize costly law enforcement interventions.
- Provides child care support that enables residents to further their education and develop work skills that return them to self sufficiency
- Provides for prenatal care and services for healthy pregnancies that avoid the long term health and educational costs associated with inadequate prenatal care

Stable and reliable City spending on housing and human services provides a broad economic benefit and public services benefit to the community, with every dollar spent matched by as much as ten dollars from other state, federal, or private funding sources. Last year, Ann Arbor made a pledge to coordinate funding among the City, County, Washtenaw United Way, and the Ann Arbor Community Foundation in two year funding cycles and the coordinated funding entities have just recently completed their first coordinated grant proposal review and recommendations.

In light of the City's commitment to its most needy residents in these difficult times, and the commitment to funding partners, the HHSAB recommends that community development funding be preserved at previous levels where at all possible in recognition that stable funding of this community priority is only more essential given the economic climate. Understanding that this may not be possible, the HHSAB further recommends that any future or budgeted funding cuts be spread over two years in order for the City commitment to the coordinated two-year funding remain level and reliable over the two-year grant cycle.

The Board again thanks you for your thoughtful consideration of these issues and recognition of the essential need for housing and support services in these most trying times and trusts that you will keep the impact in mind for the difficult budgetary decisions the City Council faces.