

Montgomery County Council Grants Advisory Group Report

FY12 Review of Council Grant Applications

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For FY12, the Grants Advisory Group reviewed a total of 207 applications from 151 different organizations totaling \$10,361,664.

By comparison, the FY11 Grants Advisory Group reviewed a total of 196 applications from 143 different organizations totaling \$10,845,130.

On October 26, 2010, the Montgomery County Council adopted Resolution #16-1521 which established an application and review process for funding requests from non-profit agencies for FY2012. This resolution is attached as *Appendix 1* (©A1-A2).

In addition, for FY12 the Council indicated that it “is particularly interested in proposals that provide emergency and other assistance to the neediest members of our community.” The FY12 Council Grant Application and supporting materials noted this Council priority for FY12 (see *Appendix 2* ©A3-A12).

As part of the FY12 grants process the Council appointed a Grants Advisory Group to review applications and provide evaluative comments on the proposals. This is the final report of the Grants Advisory Group to the Council, and completes the Group’s work for this fiscal year.

The Council appointed 24 members to the Grants Advisory Group. Two members resigned prior to the beginning of the Grants Advisory Group’s work so 22 members participated in the review and evaluation of applications. The Grants Advisory Group met a total of eight times between February 2 and April 11. Three of the meetings were of the full Grants Advisory Group and five meetings were in smaller teams of members. For the grants submitted to the Council, staff organized the Grants Advisory Group into 9 Teams with each team reviewing similar applications. Eight teams had two members of the Grants Advisory Group and one team had three members. During the month of March, each grant applicant was invited to attend a brief Question and Answer session with the Grants Advisory Group team reviewing their application. Almost all applicants accepted this invitation. In addition, a separate team reviewed the County Executive-recommended Community Grants that were not previously submitted to the Council and which did not go through a competitive process in the Executive Branch. Because of the constrained time frame for review of these Executive-recommended grants, the Grants Advisory Group was not able to have Q&A sessions with these applicants.

Collectively, the Grants Advisory Group spent over 100 hours in meetings with applicants and in reviewing applications, plus approximately an equal amount of time reviewing applications individually.

Applications have been identified according to the following categories: Large Capital: \$50,000 or greater; Small Capital: less than \$50,000; and operating support for organizations incorporated prior to/in or after year 2003.

Applications have also been identified according to program area:

- Basic needs/Emergency services/ Housing-related services/ Legal services;
- Community Development and Economic Development;
- Health and Behavioral Health;
- Services to Children and Families;
- Services to Older Adults and People with Disabilities;
- Youth Development

The summary table in the next section reflects program designations. The attached summary spreadsheet reflects the program, category, description of project, and funding requested. Those grants recommended for full funding by the Executive are noted in **bold**; those recommended for partial funding are identified in *italics* with the amount recommended by the Executive in the CE column. An asterisk beside the name of the organization denotes an application submitted to the Council that was a duplicate of an application to one of two County Government competitive grant programs: Community Development Block Grant or Community Service Grant.

I. Summary Information and Tables and Summary Worksheet

The attached summary spreadsheet beginning on ©1B has three parts:

1. **Council grant applications reviewed by the Grants Advisory Group.** The summary spreadsheet for these applications begins on ©1B. Evaluative comments for these applications begin on ©1. (As noted previously, on the spreadsheet those recommended for full funding by the Executive are noted in **bold**; those recommended for partial funding are identified in *italics* with the amount recommended by the Executive in the CE column)
2. **Executive-recommended Community Grants not previously submitted to the Council and reviewed by the Grants Advisory Group.** The Grants Advisory Group also reviewed 27 Executive-recommended Community Grants not previously submitted to the Council. The summary spreadsheet for these 27 grants not previously submitted to the Council begins on ©10B. Where the County Executive-recommended Community Grant is for additional or different funding elements of the same program reviewed in a Council grant application, the Council grant evaluation is referenced. Evaluative comments for all grant applications reviewed by the Grants Advisory Group, including these grants, are listed alphabetically beginning on ©1.

The Executive recommended a total of 73 discretionary Community Grants in the Community Grants Non-Departmental Account, plus three more that are contained in the capital budget. (These figures do not include Arts and Humanities Grants.) For a complete listing of all Executive-recommended discretionary Community Grants, competitive Community Service Grants and Community Development Block Grants, see *Appendix 3* ©A13-17.

3. **Council Grant Requests not reviewed by the Grants Advisory Group.** These requests include four applications received at the Council but reviewed by Council Committees, and five Community Development Block Grant applications that underwent a competitive process in the Executive Branch, three of which were recommended for full funding by the Executive, one, for partial funding and for which the applicant is not requesting additional funding, and one not recommended for funding but where the applicant is not requesting further consideration. (©12B). There are no corresponding evaluative comments for these grants.

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Program Areas

The Council directed that grant applications should be sorted according to the program area of the application. Staff sorted the applications into the following program areas: basic needs/ emergency services/ housing-related services/legal services; community development and economic development; health and behavioral health; services to children and families; services to older adults and people with disabilities; and youth development.

The table below shows the number of applications in each program area and the total amount of requested funding in each program area.

Table 1: Program Areas

Program Area	Number of Applications	%	Total Amount	%
Basic Needs/ emergency Svs./ Housing related Svs.	62	30%	\$ 2,931,210	28%
Community & Economic Development	28	14%	\$ 1,774,139	17%
Health/ Behavioral Health	21	10%	\$ 780,817	8%
Svs. to Children and Families	17	8%	\$ 1,225,848	12%
Svs. to Older Adults/ People with Disabilities	28	14%	\$ 1,353,670	13%
Youth Development	38	18%	\$ 1,751,420	17%
Other	13	6%	\$ 544,560	5%
Total:	207	100%	\$10,361,664	100%

For Table 1, the “Other” category refers to applications that did not fall into one of the identified program areas. They were for animal care, conflict resolution, military-related, environmental, cultural, or nonprofit capacity building requests.

II. Evaluative Comments

The Grants Advisory Group compiled one-page summaries of evaluative comments for each application reviewed. The summaries are attached on ©1-©207. As directed by the

Council, the report of the Grants Advisory Group does not rank, score, or tier the applications. As previously noted, on the summary spreadsheet those grants recommended for full funding by the Executive are noted in **bold**; those recommended for partial funding are identified in *italics* with the amount recommended by the Executive in the CE column. An asterisk beside the name of the organization denotes an application submitted to the Council that was a duplicate of an application to one of two County Government competitive grant programs: Community Development Block Grant or Community Service Grant.

The group evaluated each application on the following criteria established by the Council:

Cost-benefit analysis

- a. What is the cost of the service or activity and number of recipients?
- b. What is the impact on the recipient relative to the cost?

Public benefit

- a. Is the need clearly identified and demonstrated?
- b. Is the target population clearly described and well served by this proposal?
- c. Is there justification for the program?

Strength of organization

- a. How long have these services been delivered by this agency and for how long has this program received public funds?
- b. What efforts have been made to recruit/utilize volunteers in the program and/or leverage community resources?
- c. What other partner organizations is the applicant working with to address the needs of those served?
- d. Has the organization leveraged other non-county government funding for the proposal or other programs?
- e. Based on the budgetary information, does the organization have the capacity to carry out the proposed program, particularly with the severe downturn in the economy?

Strength of proposal

- a. Does the proposal clearly describe what the project proposes to do and what recipients will get out of it?
- b. Does the proposal outline the anticipated outcomes of the program and are the outcomes measurable and relevant?
- c. If the proposal requests funds for an existing program, does it describe the results/outcomes achieved to date? Evaluate the results achieved to date.
- d. If the proposal requests funds for a new program, does it provide information on success of program in other jurisdictions, evidence of best practices, etc.?
- e. Are there specific plans for integration/coordination with other existing nonprofit organizations and County services?
- f. Does the proposal contain a sufficiently detailed program budget to be able to assess whether project budget is in line with proposed project?

- g. Does the proposal address plans for continuing support after the grant ends and the availability of other resources?
- h. Are there any major concerns with the budget?

III. Appendices

The following documents are attached for reference and review:

- Appendix 1: Resolution # 16-1521, Establishing FY2012 Community Grant process (©A1-A2)
- Appendix 2: Council FY12 grant application form and instructions (©A3-A12)
- Appendix 3: Complete list of Executive-recommended Community Grants and competitive Community Service Grants and Community Development Block Grants (©A13-A17)

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