

County reports on use of, applications for stimulus money, Oct. 20, 2009

This is an update, regarding the status of applications and delivery of any federal stimulus funds to Washington County.

Board of Commissioners

The Washington County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution July 14, 2009, stating they wished to garner stimulus funding for the county, where appropriate, to give local communities and county programs a short-term economic boost while providing long-lasting benefits to the county. Some funds will be used to fill gaps left by state revenue reductions. Board members are also committed to refrain from using the stimulus funds on programs that will obligate the county to additional spending in the future. With that in mind, county officials have formally resolved to commit stimulus funds to innovative or practical investments in the future.

Board Chair Myra Peterson testified Wednesday, Aug. 26, at the Capitol in St. Paul during a hearing conducted by U.S. Rep. Betty McCollum on the use of ARRA funds in state communities and agencies. Peterson outlined the programs in which Washington County will use stimulus funds.

Community Development Block Grant

Washington County was awarded \$218,213 in Community Development Block Grant Program funds through a funding formula. Allocations to states and local governments were distributed according to last year's funding formula. The county has selected the following projects on which to expend the money:

- elevator replacement at the Ann Bodlovick Senior Housing in Stillwater to replace an elevator: \$110,000.
 - the rehabilitation of three homes in Oakdale for people with mental illness, to upgrade the homes' energy efficiency: \$65,538.
 - the exterior rehabilitation of the Brick Pond Apartments in Stillwater: \$20,854.
- Community Services will use the balance, \$21,800, to administer the program.

Workforce Center

The other area in which money has been awarded is \$964,161 to be distributed to specific programs administered by the Workforce Center, in the areas of:

- \$534,145 for Dislocated Workers programs. To date, 148 individuals have been enrolled in almost 20 job specific training programs.
- \$127,462 in adult Workforce Center programs. These provide training to low-income residents whose skills are not competitive in the job market.
- \$289,936 in youth Workforce Center programs. To date, 147 youth have been provided jobs with 22 different employers.
- \$27,187 in seniors Workforce Center programs. Four low-income seniors have been placed with nonprofit and public sector employers.
- \$33,000 to partner with the South Washington County, Forest Lake and Stillwater school districts to enhance training for reading, writing, computer literacy, and work-readiness skills.

These last grants provide support training, job search assistance, job placement, summer jobs for youth, career guidance, Adult Basic Education and General Educational Development Diploma assistance.

Five youth have been hired through Workforce Center stimulus money to work at three of the county's library branches.

Sheriff's Office

The county's Sheriff's Office has been approved for \$39,353 through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program. This money will be used to support a canine unit in the county during the next three years.

Additional stimulus money has been requested, but the county has not received a definitive answer.

Energy Efficiency

The County will receive a direct allocation for the Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grants Program of \$693,300. The county will use the money for a variety of energy efficient projects including updating out-of-date air conditioning, lighting, and automation controls which will reduce overall operating expenses. Energy audits will explore and determine future energy savings opportunities. Also, funding for an energy management plan will enable Washington County to participate and coordinate efforts with other local government units, and to explore future energy-related projects that will extend beyond the current funding period. This energy efficiency grant has been approved.

In addition, funds will be used to improve signal timing on two traffic corridors in Woodbury, Woodbury Drive and Radio Drive. This will result in energy savings for motorists who will be able to navigate the corridor more efficiently.

Criminal Justice

Community Corrections department received a grant for \$187,425 to pay for a probation officer to work with offenders with drug problems. The department applied for two additional probation officers, but were not awarded grants for those positions.

Community Services

Community Services has applied for funds for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, in conjunction with Anoka, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott and Chisago counties. The Washington County portion of the grant would be \$2,547,750. Up to 68 units of abandoned and/or foreclosed properties could be assisted with the funds. Word is expected later this year regarding whether Washington County is eligible for funding. Money should be allocated at the beginning of next year.

Public Health and Environment

Public Health and Environment will receive an additional \$12,562 in in-kind vaccinations for expanded adult and adolescent immunization efforts.

Transportation

Two transportation projects that are funded by stimulus funds, and will be specific to Washington County, are County Road 83 overpass in Forest Lake, with the construction of bridge and retaining walls at the overpass for \$5 million; and work in conjunction with Anoka County to reconstruct the interchange at Interstate 35E and County Highway 14 for \$2,412,500. Those grants have been approved. Construction on the County Road 83 overpass is expected to begin next spring.

In addition to county road projects, the Minnesota Department of Transportation or local municipalities will also use ARRA funds to do projects in the county. They include:

- Mill and overlay pavement preservation project on Interstate 35 from the Interstate 35W and Interstate 35E split south to Highway 8. ARRA funds: \$8,239,000.
- A mill and overlay project on Highway 95, or St. Croix Trail, from Nelson Street in Stillwater to Highway 97. ARRA funds: \$5,986,000. Roadway widening and construction of center lanes at intersections on Highway 5 (Stillwater Boulevard) between Manning Avenue and 58th Avenue North, near Stillwater Area High School. ARRA funds: \$3,210,000.
- Curb repair, public utility repairs, pavement mill and overlay and general repair of Weir, Lake, Pioneer and Valley Creek in the City of Woodbury: \$1,250,250.
- Hadley Avenue North in Oakdale, providing more than a mile of a street overlay between Hudson Boulevard and 11th Street North: \$368,000.
- Mill and overlay work and storm sewer work on Washington Avenue in Stillwater between Highway 36 and Orleans: \$280,000.
- Old Wildwood Road and Trunk Highway 244 in Mahtomedi, to construct a right-turn lane and bypass lane on Highway 244 at Old Wildwood Lane: \$156,000.

Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA)

The Washington County HRA has a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds of \$90,000 to supplement an existing program specifically targeted to improve the energy efficiency of the HRA's 56 scattered-site public housing units. In addition, the Washington County HRA will apply for a \$1.3 million grant through the Homelessness Prevention and Re-Housing Program Funds.

Accounting and Finance

Accounting and Finance is working with accounting staff in each appropriate department to assure that the proper staff are aware of ARRA reporting requirements and are properly registered in the federal reporting system.

The level of scrutiny of expenditures is high, and reports will be made public on www.recovery.gov. Detailed, quarterly reports must be provided within 10 days of quarter end.

Accounting for stimulus funds must be completed separate from other grants, even if the county has prior funds from the same program.

The county is responsible for gathering and reporting certain information from sub-recipients, just as the state will sometimes be required to gather information from the county.

The complete system for gathering information on grant activities is still under development.

ARRA Requirements Workshop

The Recovery Act imposes a set of new quarterly reporting requirements for grantees of about 300 programs. With the exception of entitlement grants (such as Medicaid) and a few other categories of funding streams, Washington County recipients of ARRA funds must comply with these requirements, sometimes called the Section 1512 requirements. Information provided through this quarterly reporting process will be available on the Recovery.gov website, where the public and interest groups may view and analyze it.

Dakota County staff members were host to a workshop Aug. 14 to familiarize ARRA grantees with the Section 1512 requirements. The goals of the workshop were to familiarize staff with the Section 1512 requirements; alert them to provisions that may be problematic; and help them navigate internal administrative processes more smoothly.

Two Washington County staff members, Amanda Hollis from administration and Kathy Trombly-Ferrin from accounting and finance, attended the workshop.

Registration in federalreporting.gov, one of the main systems to be used for the quarterly reporting, opened Aug. 17. The first set of data was due Oct. 10.

Washington County American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Proposal Status Report

Includes all proposals (formula and competitive) where a viable funding source has been identified and applied for.

	Department	Amount Requested	Federal or State	Application Deadline	Announcement Expected	Awarded	Award Amount	Anticipated # of Jobs Created/Maintained
Byrne Justice Assistance Grants (JAG)								
Canine unit	Sheriff's Office	\$39,353	Federal Formula	4/27/2009	8/31/2009	Yes	\$39,353	*0.4
Probation Officer Staffing- Domestic Violence	Community Corrections	\$175,000	Federal Competitive	4/27/2009	after 7/9/2009	No		1.0
**Probation Officer Staffing- Domestic Violence	Community Corrections	\$142,692	State Competitive	7/23/2009	9/4/2009	No		1.0
Probation Officer Staffing- Juvenile Probation Services	Community Corrections	\$71,698	State Competitive	7/23/2009	9/4/2009	No		0.5
Probation Officer Staffing- Offender Recovery Program	Community Corrections	\$187,425	State Competitive	7/23/2009	9/4/2009	Yes	\$187,425	1.0
Public Safety Dispatcher	Sheriff's Office	\$199,000	Federal Competitive	4/27/2009	after 7/9/2009			2.2
Support Staff-Jail Administration	Sheriff's Office	\$90,000	State Competitive	7/23/2009	9/4/2009	No		1.0
Support Staff- Civil Department	Sheriff's Office	\$287,000	State Competitive	7/23/2009	9/4/2009	No		2.0
Support Staff-Apprehension Team	Sheriff's Office	\$353,500	State Competitive	7/23/2009	9/4/2009	No		2.0
COPS Hiring Recovery Program	Sheriff's Office	\$1,748,194	Federal Competitive	4/27/2009	after 7/9/2009	No		19.0
Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Program								
Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Program	Public Works, Public Health and Environment	\$693,300	Federal Formula	8/10/2009	NA	Yes	\$693,300	*7.5
Community Development Block Grant								
Community Development Block Grant	Community Services	*** \$218,213	Federal Formula	6/5/2009	NA	Yes	\$218,213	*2.4
Neighborhood Stabilization Program Two (NSP 2)- applied with Anoka, Dakota, Ramsey, Scott, and Chisago Counties								
Emergency assistance to redevelop abandoned and foreclosed homes and residential properties	Community Services	**** \$2,547,750	Federal Competitive	7/17/2009	after 10/1/2009			*1.0

* The formula for the number of jobs created/maintained is from the Executive Office of the President Council of Economic Advisors, "Estimates of Job Creation from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009," May 2009.

**This grant can be applied for twice, once through the federal competitive process and once through the state competitive process.

*** \$21,213 will stay with the county, the remaining money will go to the Ann Bodlovick Senior Housing Elevator Replacement Project, Publicly Owned Transitional Housing Energy Efficiency Rehabilitation Project, and Brick Pond Apartments Exterior Repair and Replacement Project.

**** \$88,875 will stay with the county for administrative costs, the remaining money will go to the Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA).

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Transportation								
Reconstruct interchange at Interstate 35E and County Highway 14 in conjunction with Anoka County	Public Works	\$2,412,500	State Competitive	5/13/2009	mid July, 2009	Yes	\$2,412,500	*26.2
Bridge and retaining walls for CR 83	Public Works	\$5,000,000	State Competitive	5/13/2009	mid July, 2009	Yes	\$5,000,000	*54.3
Youth Program, Dislocated Work, Adult and Senior Program Assistance								
Dislocated Workers	Community Services	\$534,145	Federal Formula	4/27/2009	NA	Yes	\$534,145	*5.8
Adults	Community Services	\$127,462	Federal Formula	4/28/2009	NA	Yes	\$127,462	*1.4
Seniors	Community Services	\$27,187	Federal Formula	4/29/2009	NA	Yes	\$27,187	*0.3
Youth	Community Services	\$289,936	Federal Formula	4/30/2009	NA	Yes	\$289,936	*3.2
FastTrac Initiative and Adult Basic Education Programs								
Fast Trac Initiative to develop and/or enhance partnerships with local Adult Basic Education programs	Community Services	\$33,000	State Formula	6/12/2009	NA	Yes	\$33,000	*0.4
Federal Vaccination Funds								
Expand adult and adolescent immunization efforts	Public Health and Environment	\$12,562	State Formula		NA			* 0.1

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