



May 28, 2009

Mayor John Dickert
And Common Council
Racine, WI 53403

Your Honor and Aldermen:

I respectfully request to appear before the appropriate committee to discuss our request to apply for and accept the U.S. Department of Human Services, Office of Community Services, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) –Strengthening Communities Fund-State, Local, and Tribal Government Capacity Building Program. The grant control number is 2009-025.

The grant is for \$250,000 with a project period of two years. The community partner for this initiative is University of Wisconsin-Parkside Center for Community Partnerships. The goal of the Capacity Building program is to build the capacity of City of Racine services through the Grants Facilitator position and of nonprofit organizations in their service area, whether secular or faith based, to maximize their social impact as they provide services to address economic recovery issues present in their communities. The City and nonprofit organizations receiving assistance will be better equipped as a result of this grant program. The initiative is further designed to build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to access ARRA efforts/benefits and has the following specific objectives:

- Helping organizations develop the capacity to offer additional services based on new needs that have arisen from the economic downturn and new relevant ARRA efforts/programs for which the organizations might be eligible (e.g. offering weatherization activities or green jobs training).
- Helping organizations form new partnerships to apply for ARRA funding/programs.
- Helping organizations form/strengthen partnerships to better facilitate referrals for services/benefits.

This grant program funds capacity building activities that produce measurable effects that result in more sustainable organizations. By addressing issues that are critical to the long-term viability of nonprofit organizations, these organizations are better prepared and positioned to understand and meet the needs of their communities.



The Strengthening Communities Fund Capacity Building program grants are intended to expand the capacity of nonprofit organizations to deliver social services in a secular manner. These grants cannot be used to provide direct client services. The program grant funds can pay for capacity building activities that result in improved social service programs and activities.

The proposed City of Racine Capacity Building program will use the funds in the following three areas:

- Conducting outreach and education aimed at increasing the involvement of nonprofit organizations in the economic recovery.
- Providing training and technical assistance aimed at building the capacity of nonprofit organizations to address the broad economic recovery issues present in their communities.
- Building the capacity of their office or designee to better involve nonprofit organizations in the economic recovery.

Program Expectations/Outcomes: Through capacity building activities in these three areas, it is expected that the City of Racine Capacity Building Program will:

1. Increase the involvement of nonprofit organizations in the economic recovery by facilitating partnerships (e.g., informal networks, coalitions, or more formal financial relationships) between and among nonprofits and other government agencies. Capacity building activities are designed to increase an organization's sustainability and effectiveness, enhance its ability to provide social services, and create collaborations to better serve those most in need.
2. Assess the most significant capacity building needs of the organizations they propose to serve.
3. Assist nonprofit organizations with the identification of organizational needs.

There is a 20% match (62,500) for this grant. If you have further questions, a grant summary is attached.

Sincerely,

Deborah L. Embry, MBA
Grants Facilitator