



Washtenaw United Way

## New Funding Model Questions and Answers

### Background Material

The Board of Directors wanted a model that clearly aligned with the Washtenaw United Way's mission, strategic plan and values (approved in 2006). They also wanted a new approach and goals that would specifically help us actualize the following overarching principles for community investment that were approved in 2007. The new model will take effect October 1, 2008

#### Fund Distribution Redesign Overarching Principles

Adopted by the Washtenaw United Way Board of Directors on June 12, 2007

The Washtenaw United Way Community Investment system serves the health and human service needs of individuals and families in our community by investing in a focused set of priorities, primarily supporting programs serving persons with fewest resources and experiencing greatest need.

#### We value:

- Making outcome-based community investments in well-managed and well-governed programs, agencies, partnerships, and initiatives linked to the priority areas, and rewarding best practices, including leveraging Washtenaw United Way support.
- Collaborating actively with other funders around shared priority areas and initiatives.
- Maximizing resources through collaboration, resource sharing amongst agencies and supporting mergers where appropriate – making sure vital programs/services are not lost as a result.
- Advocating and funding for nonprofit management capacity.
- Supporting innovation and flexibility by offering year-round access to funding for local unplanned opportunities and emergencies.
- Building a diverse, talented staff and trained volunteer team who ensure that United Way community investment approaches and decisions are made in alignment with these principles.

#### Our Investment Goals:

1. Support and align with existing community plans and agendas for change where possible
2. Bring organizations together as partners to begin conversations about developing more efficient and coordinated approaches to service delivery

3. Develop improved ways to gauge and report collective results/outcomes across agencies within a focused set of issues
4. Prevent duplicate structures or processes in those cases where agencies are already involved as a collaborative network
5. Address a continuum of needed support services and resources for people of all ages and abilities

### **Strategic Funding Areas (60%)**

Shelter and Housing

*Services  
Support goals of the Blueprint to End Homelessness*

*Increase supply and improve access to decent, affordable housing with supportive services through agencies that provide emergency, transitional, and permanent housing.*

Access to Health Care

*Services + Planning grant*

*Increase number of children and families who have access to health care, with particular attention to gaps in insurance*

Aging in Place

*Services  
Support goals of the Blueprint for Aging*

*Ensure basic needs resources are available that support independence and safety for the older adult population and their caregivers*

Child Care

*Services*

*Improve availability and quality of needed early care, childcare resources and basic needs supports for children 0-6, with particular attention to parents needing child care support to maintain employment*

Hunger

*Services + Planning grant*

*Improve the county-wide systemic coordination and efficiency of the food collection and distribution efforts*

### **Transitional Support Funding (40%)**

*Services/programs/coalitions/initiatives*

*Ensure that a continuum of supports are available for people of all ages and abilities- ranging from preventive strategies..... to one-time emergency assistance.... to services that work with individuals and families striving to become more self-sufficient*

## ADDITIONAL FACTS ABOUT STRATEGIC FUNDING AREAS

- Washtenaw United Way has identified and invited a Lead Coordinating Agency for each of the five strategic funding areas as the work proceeds. We expect the lead coordinating agency to have their board approval on or before July 1<sup>st</sup>, to assume this role.
- Washtenaw United Way will commit 3-year support to the five strategic funding areas with parameters around distribution, reporting, etc.
- Donors will be able, beginning in 2008, to designate to the five strategic funding areas as well as to individual agencies.
- Currently funded Washtenaw United Way agencies receiving specific funding that fall within the five strategic funding areas will be grandfathered in for year one based on their current funding levels.

### **Q. What was Washtenaw United Way's overall reason for transitioning to a strategic funding component?**

1. Focus our leadership involvement on a select set of issues related to basic needs
2. Greater coordination, planning and participatory decision-making across multiple agencies working to serve the same target populations or issue
3. Increase efficiencies over time that ultimately create improved service delivery to clients
4. Increase partnership 'with' and 'between' front line agencies who have the content expertise and the 'pulse of the community' about people's needs
5. Build a framework from which potential future coordinated/blended funding decision- making between local funders can be discussed and piloted

### **Q. Who are the lead coordinating agencies?**

Washtenaw Housing Alliance	Shelter/Housing
Corner Health Center	Health Care
Catholic Social Services	Aging in Place
Success by Six	Child Care
Food Gatherers	Hunger

### **Q. Can strategic areas of focus change from year to year?**

Yes- we expect that strategic issues will change over time. The Washtenaw United Way board is making a 3-year commitment of funding to the current five areas. By year three, we expect that the agency teams will make shared funding recommendation that demonstrate the most effective way to distribute funding amongst themselves to a) better service people in need, and b) generate even greater efficiencies and results.

In year one, we will invite the teams to submit one coordinated single response and propose a collective set of outcomes that we will track over the multi-year period.

In addition, Washtenaw United Way will have one specific volunteer oversight team that negotiates the expected outcomes. The volunteers will also support and follow the progress/results in these five areas.

### **Q: Why did you select these five strategic funding areas for designations?**

Data from the Community Needs assessment that was completed in 2006, ongoing statistics from the 2-1-1 Call Center and other local health and human service statistical reports supports the selection of the five

strategic funding areas. In addition, community leaders, agency representatives, and interested donors participated in the process.

Many donors prefer an option for issue-based giving in addition to designating to a local agency. Affording donors another option for giving will hopefully encourage more funds here in Washtenaw County, directly helping those agency teams trying to better meet the needs of clients in a coordinated way.

**Q: Will Washtenaw United Way continue to process designations to individual agencies?**

Yes. Donors can still designate to agencies in addition to directing dollars to all or any the five strategic funding areas.

**Q: What is the current % of designations?**

38% of dollars pledged to Washtenaw United Way are designated. These funds are given to agencies and not included in the funds available for our volunteers to allocate locally.

**Q. How is this new approach different from our current approach?**

Two key differences:

Instead of meeting the needs of a select group of agencies, the new model meets identified community needs through a variety of investment strategies with agencies as our partners, whether in existing strong partnerships working around select issues, addressing identified gaps in services that have been highlighted in numerous local needs assessments, or by convening and supporting basic needs sectors to reward and support new cooperative planning..

Rather than a closed agency process which allows no new agencies to seek funding, any Washtenaw County 501(c) 3 health and human service nonprofit agency that meets the defined criteria will be eligible to apply. We expect that numerous new agencies will apply as a result of this change.

Volunteers will continue to be actively involved in making recommendations and monitoring progress.

**Q. How many agencies will no longer be funded?**

All requests for funding that meet the criteria will be eligible for funding consideration. At that point we will be better able to answer this question.

**Q. How many new agencies will be funded?**

We are not establishing a targeted number of new agencies to fund. All current agencies are eligible to apply for annual funding, unless recommendations from the most recent allocation panels have not been addressed.

We will make investments in those agencies, programs, coalitions, etc. that best address stages along a basic needs continuum. This may mean that new agencies that apply will merit funding.

**If you would like more information you have the following options:**

**Attend the Community Forum** – Wednesday, March 12, 2008 – 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Keep checking the **Washtenaw United Way website** for new postings – [www.wuway.org](http://www.wuway.org)

**E-Mail** Debbie Jackson – Community investment Director – [djackson@wuway.org](mailto:djackson@wuway.org)

**Call** Washtenaw United Way – 734.971.8200