


*City of Alexandria, Virginia***MEMORANDUM**

DATE: OCTOBER 3, 2008

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USE OF CONTINGENT RESERVE FUNDS FOR A SENIOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

ISSUE: Consideration of the transfer of \$90,000 for a senior needs assessment study from contingent reserves to the Department of Human Services (DHS) / Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) and recommendations for the use of these funds.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council approve transfer to DHS of \$90,000 in funds designated in contingent reserves as part of the FY 2009 budget process to be expended as follows:

- \$80,000 to retain the services of a consulting firm to create a comprehensive community-wide plan that addresses the needs of the aging population in the City of Alexandria and assist City staff in the development of a strategic plan for implementation. A request for proposal to be issued upon approval.
- \$10,000 to contract with a consulting firm to assist the City of Alexandria to undertake, analysis and prepare a report recommending models of affordable assisted living, home and community based services to best meet local demand.

BACKGROUND: On April 29, 2008, City Council approved the FY 2009 general operating budget which included \$90,000 in contingent reserves along with a request for recommendations from City staff for the use of these funds.

DISCUSSION: The DHS / OAAS mission is to promote safe, independent and healthy lifestyles for older Alexandrians, particularly those who are low-income or at risk of social isolation or institutionalization by creating a "Livable Community" and support aging in place.

As groundwork, staff at DHS have completed an extensive literature review of national trends, conducted a services providers' forum and hosted a community-wide training on the topic of "Building Community Coalitions" in partnership with AARP Foundation. In addition, staff has coordinated efforts with the City's GIS Division to extract demographic data from its case management systems regarding current recipients of services provided by DHS / OAAS. All of the aforementioned work was completed to inform the elements of the scope of work.

As the numbers of older Alexandrians increase DHS needs to assess and identify resources that will create a comprehensive community-wide plan to address those needs and identify gaps in services. This would include:

- The projected change in the number of seniors in the City of Alexandria;
- How those changes will affect services provided to older Alexandrians with low income, and those with limited English proficiency;
- How the number of Alexandrians age 85 and older will impact the need for supportive services provided to them and their caregivers;
- What services will be needed to allow older Alexandrians to age-in-place; and
- Analyze how the programs, policies and services currently in place can be improved and/or expanded to include new and other resources available in DHS, other City departments and service providers.
- Identify where the City of Alexandria and DHS / OAAS needs to be in the future to serve older Alexandrians and the method of getting there; and
- Analyze the external environment and how this affects the future direction of aging services.

The creation of non-institutional long-term care (LTC) options for the elderly that fosters on-going connections to the community and maintains circles of natural support is a critical policy and programmatic challenge nationwide. DHS in partnership with the Commission on Aging (COA) formed an Affordable Assisted Living workgroup. As a result, extensive research has been conducted and data gathered. DHS / OAAS will be seeking technical assistance from a consulting group with expertise in the development of non-institutional long-term care options. This would include:

- Review of existing Market Study conducted on behalf of the Affordable Assisted Living Workgroup, in order to recommend models of affordable assisted living, home and community based services to best meet local demand; and
- Identify different scenarios and conduct a financial feasibility analysis for recommendations that include new construction or rehabilitation.
- Compiling and interpreting research already gathered;
- Conducting additional research as may be necessary to make concrete and workable recommendations;
- Exploring financial avenues to sustain such a project;
- Seek from all interested parties information about the feasibility of implementing affordable assisted living projects; and
- Produce a report to determine the financial viability of such a project.

FISCAL IMPACT: The \$ 90,000 in Contingent Reserve that is available in FY 2009 will fund the following:

\$80,000 to fund the services of a consulting group with demonstrated experience in conducting field research in the area of Aging and in developing “Livable Communities” as well as strategic planning and implementation.

\$10,000 to fund the services of a consulting group that can provide the City of Alexandria with technical assistance for affordable assisted living for the elderly.

ATTACHMENT: None

STAFF:

Debra R. Collins, Assistant City Manager for Community and Human Services

Leticia Lacomba, Deputy Director of Human Services

Laura Morrison, Fiscal Officer III, Human Services

Bruce Johnson, Director, Management and Budget