



## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item  
Meeting of December 15, 2007**

**DATE: November 30, 2007**

**SUBJECT:** Allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to the Child and Family Network Centers (CFNC) for expansion of a preschool program at Virginia Gardens.

**C. M. RECOMMENDATION:** Allocate \$40,000 of CDBG Unprogrammed funds (206.450001.72405) to CFNC (206.456300.72405) for expansion of the preschool program operated by CFNC at AHC Inc.'s Virginia Gardens.

**ISSUES:** Whether to allocate additional CDBG funds to enable CFNC to carry through with its planned expansion of preschool services.

**SUMMARY:** The Child and Family Network Centers requests \$40,000 to enable expansion of its free comprehensive preschool program, operating successfully at Virginia Gardens, to serve 16 additional children. This amount, combined with CFNC's current allocation of \$25,000 FY 2008 CDBG funds, will ensure operation of the program through June 30, 2008.

**BACKGROUND:** The Child and Family Network Centers operates a nationally accredited preschool program with centers in Alexandria and Arlington, designed to meet the needs of young children ages 3 – 5 years, who are living at or below 185% of the poverty level. The majority of CFNC families speak English as a second language, with an average educational level of 6<sup>th</sup> grade. CFNC integrates services such as health and wellness programs to further support and strengthen families. CFNC is able to serve children who do not qualify for Head Start, thus preparing at-risk children for future school success.

CFNC was awarded FY 2006 and 2007 Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF) Housing Services funds to open and operate a preschool center at AHC Inc.'s Virginia Gardens, serving 16 children. CFNC proposed to open additional classrooms in FY 2008, and CDBG funds in the amount of \$25,000 were awarded for expansion, with the understanding that a subcontract with Northern Virginia Family Service (NVFS) would help provide the necessary operating funds.

The arrangement with NVFS has fallen through and now the organization is left with 22 children on a waiting list for an early childhood program. Classroom space is available but funds are needed to operate the expanded program this fiscal year. CFNC will not spend the \$25,000

County Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

County Attorney: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: Jane M. Eboch, CPHD, Housing Division; Toya Bryant, DHS, Child and Family Services Division

CDBG funds unless it has assurance that adequate funds are available to support the new classroom for the remainder of the fiscal year.

**DISCUSSION:** CFNC has an aggressive plan to address the need for early childhood education in South Arlington. Arlington Public Schools data document that more than a third of its kindergarten students have had no prior preschool experience. The Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families Arlington Report Card identified a significant gap in early childhood education programs that serve children living at or below 185% of the poverty level. CFNC has been collaborating with Arlington Public Schools and Arlington Head Start to secure funds and develop resources to address this critical need.

CFNC has demonstrated outstanding program outcomes and has a very successful track record for fundraising. The organization is committed to developing long term, sustainable funding for its centers and programs. It is likely that additional County support will be needed for FY 2009, but CFNC expects to secure other support for FY 2010. A proposal for FY 2009 CDBG funds has been reviewed by the Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee (CDCAC) in its annual consideration of requests for CD funding.

FY 2008

Awarded: \$25,000 CDBG (Year 1 of 2)

Request: \$40,000 CDBG unprogrammed funds

FY 2009

Awarded: \$25,000 CDBG (Year 2 of 2, contingent on availability of CDBG funds)

Request: \$60,000 CDBG (to be considered by County Board in January, as part of AHIF/CD recommendations)

The CDCAC will review this request for \$40,000 unprogrammed CDBG funds at its meeting on December 5, 2007. A memo will be sent to the Board from CDCAC prior to the December 15 Board meeting.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** There is no impact on net tax support. This recommendation leaves a balance of \$476,289 CDBG unprogrammed funds.