



Montgomery County Council

For Immediate Release

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COUNCIL APPROVES CHANGE TO GRANTS PROCESS

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The Montgomery County Council today gave approval to a change in the Council's grants process to establish an application and review process for Council grants for health and human services and community development activities.

For FY 2005, the Council appropriated \$3.3 million in discretionary grants. Of this total, \$1.8 million were recommended by the County Executive and \$1.5 million were added by the Council.

"This new process will provide human service organizations with a fair and transparent method to apply for funding and will also provide the County Council with better information about the organizations that seek our support," said Councilmember George Leventhal, chair of the Council's Health & Human Services Committee. "A change was needed because in the past, I believe the County Council's process for supporting these organizations was too confusing and too political."

"This is an important step in assuring that the Council grants process is transparent and that all organizations in the County doing good work have the ability to apply for County funding," said Marilyn Praisner, chair of the Management & Fiscal Policy Committee. "Our partnerships with the non-profit sector are valuable and this change should strengthen those bonds."

The Council is holding a public meeting this Wednesday evening at 6 PM in the Council Office Building to talk with non-profits about the grants process.

The process established today by the Council includes:

- The Council will solicit applications for grants, to be received by a set deadline. *(more...)*

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- Once applications are received, Councilmembers will select applications to forward for review.
- If an organization applied for a competitive grant and was not recommended by the County Executive to receive funding, it may apply for a grant from the Council. The organization must submit the standard County Council grant application form. The Council will receive information about these organizations from the reports of the previous competitive review process.
- The Council will convene a review panel. The Council will begin by soliciting volunteers for this panel from the current members of the panels that review Community Development Block Grants and Community Service Grants. The Council may also solicit volunteers from other boards and commissions if the response from the existing review panel members is insufficient.
- Applications nominated by Councilmembers will be sent to the Council's panel for review.
- The panel will review all applications nominated by Councilmembers that have not previously been reviewed by one of the two panels. This will include all Executive recommended grants that have not gone through the panel review process (currently recommended as Private Agency Requests).
- The panel will prepare a report that contains evaluative comments on the relative merits of the proposals. The Council will also receive copies of the reports from the Community Service Grant and Community Development Block Grant panels' previous review efforts. Among these documents, the Council will receive evaluative information about all grant applications.
- The panels' reports will be advisory; Councilmembers will not be bound by the recommendations. Councilmembers will nominate entities for consideration on the Council's reconciliation list.
- If a Councilmember wishes to nominate an entity that did not meet the application deadline and was not reviewed, the entity can be added to the reconciliation list with five Councilmember votes.
- Reconciliation list process will proceed as in the past.

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