

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) – also known as the federal stimulus bill – became law in February of 2009. ARRA seeks to invest \$780 billion nationally in a broad range of strategies designed to facilitate economic recovery and to make transformational investments in infrastructure, technology and human capital.

A large portion of stimulus funding is flowing to cities, counties and other local governmental entities via formula grants, which vary according to the purposes of the grant and the characteristics of the target population. Much of this formula-driven money has already been allocated.

Other programs with ARRA will award funds through competitive grants. In some cases, the specifics of such grant opportunities are only now becoming public, or will become available in the coming months. Many of the competitive grants will utilize scoring criteria that prioritize new problem-solving approaches and innovative collaborations.

An intergovernmental steering committee was organized and initially convened in April of this year. The members are the six local taxing jurisdictions, City of Austin, Austin Community College, Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Travis County, Travis County Healthcare District, and the Austin Independent School District, along with the Community Action Network and Workforce Solutions.

The steering committee has established intergovernmental/community working groups in the following areas:

- Education
- Energy
- Family Sustainability
- Healthcare
- Public Safety/Law Enforcement
- Technology
- Transportation
- Workforce Development

The goals of this collaborative are:

- to exchange information about stimulus funding opportunities being pursued by the governmental partners;
- to identify and develop opportunities for collaboration in securing additional stimulus funding, particularly in those competitive grant situations that place a premium upon creative problem-solving and intergovernmental collaboration;

- to advocate for modification of future stimulus grants programs to better meet the needs of the region; and
- to communicate effectively among governmental partners, interested stakeholders and the general public regarding efforts to maximize ARRA funding for the region.

Though the availability of federal ARRA funds was the impetus behind this effort, the steering committee believes that this collaboration will result in mutual benefits beyond ARRA.

This Resolution will be before each of the other partners in the Collaboration for approval October and November 2009.