COVID-19 Challenges and Responses

TERESA GILLOTTI, OFFICE OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
NEEL HAJRA, ANN ARBOR AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
PAM SMITH, UNITED WAY OF WASHTENAW COUNTY

APRIL 20, 2020
Long Local Tradition of Public-Private Partnership

Washtenaw Coordinated Funders

- Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation
- ST. JOSEPH MERCY ANN ARBOR
- City of Ann Arbor
- ONE Community
- United Way of Washtenaw County

coordinatedfunders.org
COVID-19 Community Relief Fund one million dollar goal

Whose work benefits people with low incomes, communities of color, and historically and/or systematically marginalized people, services are offered in 48197/98 and rural Washtenaw County

Whose primary program participants are high-risk for contracting COVID-19 (e.g. older adults and those with chronic health conditions)

Who have experienced a decrease in critical volunteer capacity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and an increase in staffing demands as a result of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic

- Within 2 weeks distributed 679K, Total of one million granted by end of April
- Organized thousands of community wide volunteers through VolunteerWashtenaw.org
- 2-1-1 call system has handled thousands of calls: priority calls are food and housing. Data gathered during calls highlights emerging/critical needs
Over $1M granted in response to crisis (including support for United Way’s Relief Fund)

Launched $500k Nonprofit Loan Fund ($100k in loans so far)

Initial priorities have been older adults, young children, and disparately impacted neighborhoods

Supported the County’s Small Business Resiliency Fund and the Arts Alliance’s Creative Washtenaw Aid 2020 Fund

Blending data, institutional feedback, and individual feedback to inform evolving priorities
Working with Shelter Association to extend warming shelter and expand locations to allow homeless to shelter in place – 5 current sites
  - Additional sites being evaluated
  - Ultimate focus on permanent housing

Administering Small Business Resiliency/Relief fund in partnership with Ann Arbor SPARK, SBDC, WCC entrepreneurship center and WC Racial Equity Office
  - More than $1.3 million in funding for Washtenaw businesses
  - $577,500 committed
  - Additional reviews underway with final grants to be awarded by April 30

Managing Barrier Busters network of 100 non-profits
  - Direct support for residents with eviction prevention, utility payments, transportation
  - Expansion of Unmet Needs Fund in response to COVID including food, childcare, etc.
A Coordinated Funding Approach
to meet the needs of our community’s most vulnerable

$4.9 Million in Grants

Targeting Four Priority Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aging</td>
<td>$1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Net Health &amp; Nutrition</td>
<td>$1.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing &amp; Homelessness</td>
<td>$570,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood School-Aged Youth</td>
<td>$260,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 funding partners

Award through a joint decision-making process

Supporting Over 40 Local Human Service Organizations
Converted many current program grants into general operating support to lift agency restrictions

COFU partners were in direct and constant contact as pandemic evolved maximizing networks and support systems

Considering a similar action for the upcoming grant year

Advanced some multiyear funds for nonprofits
Emerging Trends in Food Insecurity

- Food Supply Chain was interrupted, 40% donations come from restaurants and groceries
- Dramatic four fold increase on demand
- Reduction of volunteers in warehouse, National Guard assisting
- Staffing costs soaring
- Expanded EBT benefits should relieve pressure on emergency food system
Emerging Trends in Older Adult Vulnerability

- Access to healthy food is the #1 reported concern by older adults and social service agencies; depression also a growing concern
- Challenges in staying healthy (whether COVID-related or otherwise) during physical isolation
- Social isolation exacerbated by inadequate broadband access
- Not reaching out with their needs even when services and solutions exist
- Caregiving (formal and informal) has been upended and disrupted
- Disruptions will extend well beyond the pandemic period
Emerging Trends in Housing Insecurity

- State eviction moratorium extended until May 15
- Federally backed mortgages – eviction moratorium into August

Nation-wide challenges:

- Back rent and back mortgages could pile up due to job layoffs/loss
- Landlords could be impacted by lack of cash flow
- Immigrant community disproportionately impacted
The Disparate Impacts of the Crisis

- **Racial disparities** – African American 12% of Washtenaw County population but 48% of COVID-19 cases, Asian Americans have seen increase in racial attacks, xenophobia

- **Geographic disparities** – Rural communities suffering. Manchester for example has no pharmacy, no grocery store and more than half do not have Broadband for students

- **Socioeconomic disparities** – ALICE data 37% were already struggling and pandemic has exacerbated the stress and financial difficulties of maintaining household
The Disparate Impacts of the Crisis

- The poverty rate in Ann Arbor is 22.1%. [https://www.welfareinfo.org/poverty-rate/michigan/ann-arbor](https://www.welfareinfo.org/poverty-rate/michigan/ann-arbor)
Suggestions for City

- Play to existing strengths *(COFU partnership)* and collaborate
- Leverage existing *investments* through Coordinated Funding, Barrier Busters, and Shelter Association
- **Maintain capacity** for the ongoing challenges of the crisis
- Use **data** to make decisions, rely on **staff and experts** for recommendations, keep entire city in mind when making hard choices – **equity matters**
Economic Development

- Nonprofits as employers (10.2% of national workforce)
- Small Business Resiliency Fund
- Technical assistance as businesses shift focus in short/mid term