

**PROPOSAL REVIEW: Individual Staff Review for 2011-2012
For Community Resources Proposals to be Submitted to the
CDBG Committee**

1. **Program Name:** Housing Mediation Service

2. **Agency Name:** Tenant Resource Center, Inc. (TRC)

3. **Requested Amounts:** 2011: \$18,200
 2012: \$18,200 **Prior Year Level: \$10,953**

4. **Project Type:** New Continuing

5. **Framework Plan Objective Most Directly Addressed by Proposed by Activity:**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. Housing – Owner – occupied housing | <input type="checkbox"/> J. Improvement of services to homeless and special populations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B. Housing – Housing for homebuyers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X. Access to Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D. Housing – Rental housing | <input type="checkbox"/> K. Physical improvement of community service facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E. Business development and job creation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> F. Economic development of small businesses | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> L. Revitalization of strategic areas | |

6. **Anticipated Accomplishments (Proposed Service Goals)**

Complete 95 formal mediations with agreements; and 70% of formal mediations result in tenant avoiding an eviction.

7. **To what extent does the proposal meet the Objectives of the Community Development Program Goals and Priorities for 2011-2012?**

Staff Comments: Outcome objective X. Expansion of individual choice and access to housing resources and employment and training opportunities. The Housing Mediation Service provides information to tenants and landlords in order to avoid an eviction and resulting homelessness for the tenant meeting the CD objective.

8. **To what extent is the proposed program design and work plan sufficiently detailed to demonstrate the ability to result in a positive impact on the need or problem identified?**

Staff Comments: TRC has provided mediation services since 1995. They have a structure that includes notifying each tenant involved in a small claims eviction case of the services available. Staff and volunteers then make themselves available prior to and during the weekly small claims court session. TRC and CDBG staff have worked to identify outcomes that indicate whether the service provides a positive impact. TRC now systematically reviews court records and the homeless information management system (WISP) to determine if the tenant involved in a mediation where a settlement was agreed to avoid an eviction on their record and/or needed to utilize emergency shelter indicating homelessness.

9. **To what extent does the proposal include objectives that are realistic and measurable and are likely to be achieved within the proposed timeline?**

Staff Comments: Outcomes are consistent with what has been included in previous year's contracts between TRC and the CDBG Office; TRC has generally met or exceeded their goals in the past.

10. **To what extent do the agency, staff and/or Board experience, qualifications, past performance and capacity indicate probable success of the proposal?**

Staff Comments: The Executive Director and Program Director have been with TRC for many years and are experienced in housing and tenant/landlord law. TRC reports 50% staff turnover rate. The Housing Mediation Service work is supplemented with 4 volunteer mediators who worked a combined 364 hours.

11. **To what extent is the agency's proposed budget reasonable and realistic, able to leverage additional resources, and demonstrate sound fiscal planning and management?**

Staff Comments: TRC proposes a reasonable budget but has suffered from budget cuts from all funding sources. The CDBG Office also contracts with TRC using state ESG funds for Housing Mediation Services. For the contract period 7/10-6/11, the City's total award was cut nearly \$100,000 so TRC's portion is reduced from \$5,575 to \$3,395. TRC has continued to provide the same level of mediation services even as their funding has fluctuated greatly.

12. **To what extent does the agency's proposal demonstrate efforts and success at securing a diverse array of support, including volunteers, in-kind support and securing partnerships with agencies and community groups?**

Staff Comments: The Housing Mediation Services program uses volunteer mediators supported by paid TRC staff. In 2010, TRC received 87% of their revenue from government sources. TRC's proposed 2011 budget indicates 60% of revenue comes from government sources but includes a large increase, from \$50,000 to \$80,000, in donations.

13. To what extent does the applicant propose services that are accessible and appropriate to the needs of low income individuals, culturally diverse populations and/or populations with specific language barriers and/or physical or mental disabilities?

Staff Comments: TRC successfully serves a diverse population by employing bi-lingual staff and accommodates other barriers or disabilities on a case-by-case basis as needed.

14. To what extent does the proposal meet the technical and regulatory requirements and unit cost limits as applicable? To what extent is there clear and precise proposal information to determine eligibility?

Staff Comments: TRC complies with federal and local regulations as required by the funding sources.

15. To what extent is the site identified for the proposed project appropriate in terms of minimizing negative environmental issues, relocation and neighborhood or public concerns?

Staff Comments: TRC administrative office is centrally located and attempts to meet clients and hold mediation sessions wherever it is convenient for the participants.

16. **Other comments:** The CDBG Office also funds this program through the City's ESG award from the state Department of Commerce. The activities included in the City's application for funding are selected and prioritized by the Homeless Services Consortium. TRC received \$5,575 in 2009-10 and will receive \$3,395 in 2010-11.

Questions:

17. **Staff Recommendation**

- Not recommended for consideration
 - Recommend for consideration
 - Recommend with Qualifications
- Suggested Qualifications: