

From: Tom Martens, Executive Director, **STEAC**

Response to questions on CDBG grant application

Question #1: What percentage of food is purchased from the food bank? What percentage is purchased from grocery stores?

For the calendar year 2005, STEAC purchased 6 percent of its food from the Food Bank of Yolo County. The organization purchased 94 percent of the food from grocery stores. STEAC spent about \$16,000 on food purchases in 2005. Generally, such purchases provide about 25 percent of the food that is distributed. The rest, of course, is received from food drives.

With the CDBG and other funds, STEAC purchases perishables, such as meat, eggs, bread and margarine. As needed, STEAC also purchase items, such as peanut butter, jam, cereal, cooking oil, packaged macaroni & cheese, canned goods (fruit, vegetables and meals in a can).

Question #2: What's your plan for improving nutritional value of the food you provide as you state in your proposal?

Every few years, STEAC reviews the policies and practices for improving The nutritional value of the food distributed through the food closet. The organization is conducting that review in 2006.

Based on preliminary results of that review, STEAC will:

1. Be more selective regarding the nutritional value of purchased meals in a can in terms of protein and salt content.
2. Be more diligent in conducting regular inspections of canned and packaged food to insure expiration dates have not been exceeded.
3. Explore and, if feasible, find cost-effective ways to encourage donations or purchase frozen salmon and other fish for distribution through the food closet. STEAC currently purchases and distributes frozen hamburger.
4. Further discourage donations of food with high sugar content, such as soda, candy and cookies. STEAC already discourages donations of such items, but people still donate them. Once the items are in the closet, they are difficult to remove and volunteers have a tendency to give them to clients, who often request such items.
5. Explore the feasibility of distributing fresh fruit and vegetables. Because of the difficulty with spoilage and storage, STEAC has not distributed such items (despite the fact that it has been suggested by many volunteers and supporters). In 2006, STEAC will create a list of fruits and vegetables with a longer shelf life (e.g. apples, green bananas, potatoes, carrots, etc.) that might be distributed. STEAC will also explore the feasibility of distributing frozen fruit and vegetables. Since space is very limited in the food closet, the review will include ways to store the vegetables.

6. Explore the feasibility of soliciting donations of excess fresh fruits and vegetables from local community gardens.
7. Explore the feasibility of getting Farmer's Market vendors to request donations of left over fresh fruits and vegetables.

Question #3: Describe in detail how your CDBG RFP differs from other CDBG RFP's.

Unfortunately, STEAC is not aware of the RFP's from all the other organizations. This response is based only information gained from listening to the presentations by the nonprofit organizations at the public hearing before the Civil Service Commission.

STEAC's proposal is different, because it is the only one that involves distributing food for meals in Davis on a regular basis.

The Food Bank of Yolo County does distribute free food in Davis, but does not provide the amount and variety to constitute what would be considered of significant nutritional value.

Others groups, such as Meals on Wheels, Davis Community Meals and Grace-In-Action, provide meals for the homeless and low income clients. None of these groups distributes food.

In addition, none of the CDBG funded groups distributes toiletries and other personal care items to low-income residents. STEAC's food closet distributes such items as shampoo, soap, razors for men and women, diapers and other items.

Question #4: Describe in detail how your CDBG RFP supplements other CDBG RFP's.

The STEAC CDBG RFP supplements other CDBG RFP's by filling in the gaps for those providing food related services. For instance, STEAC distributes food in Davis that is provided by the Food Bank of Yolo County.

STEAC provides food for clients who are referred by such organizations as Davis Community Meals, Grace-In-Action, Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, Yolo Community Care Continuum and Yolo Family Services. In addition, STEAC provides holiday boxes containing food to over 400 families who are referred by these and other nonprofit agencies in Davis.

Question #5: Describe in detail your efforts to coordinate with other CDBG agencies with similar resources.

STEAC's work coordinating includes the following:

1. Joining with the Food Bank of Yolo County to purchase large quantities of food in order to reduce the cost.

2. Working with the food bank on long-term planning to increase the nutritional value of food.
3. Using warehouse space in Woodland donated by the food bank for sorting and storing donated food.
4. Gaining feedback from CDBG and other nonprofit agencies on their needs for food and methods of improving the process of referring clients to STEAC.
5. Playing a lead role with civic organizations, churches, schools and nonprofit organizations in coordinating food drives. STEAC is maintaining a section of its web page that serves as a master calendar of food drives. Some of the CDBG organizations either participate or receive food from the drives.
6. Work with CDBG and other organizations to develop long-range strategies for food collection and distribution activities in the planning process for the Homeless Coalition of Yolo County.
7. Work with CDBG organizations to develop the food related questions for survey of homeless that is administered by the homeless coalition.

In 2006, STEAC's Executive Director will be working to create a database of food and other social services that are provided in the five-county Sacramento metropolitan area as part of the Leadership Circle of the United Way Capital Region in Sacramento.
