

we grow communities



Triad Associates Newsletter

March 2010

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New Clients

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**Economic Foundation of  
Rhode Island**

## Unspent Grant Balances & Governor's Cuts

There is a lot of talk in Trenton regarding the fiscal challenges facing New Jersey and the various options the Governor may exercise to promote reform. At the March 2nd meeting of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisors, Governor Christie said, "It is my belief and my directive to the Council that we can identify a new way for New Jersey that restores fiscal responsibility and long-term solvency to our obligations. The problems are large, complex and require sacrifice. But the problems are not insurmountable if everyone recognizes the urgent need for serious reform and joins in the effort to fix what is broken." Keeping that in mind, it is our recommendation that local governments with unspent grant balances start moving quickly to expend those balances and get projects off the ground. Lingered projects that have not moved from the planning to the implementation phase could be prime targets for the State to recapture those funds. A thorough review of your community's projects and unspent grant balances would prove to be beneficial at this time. Moving stagnant projects forward could mean the difference between the completion of a much needed project in your community and the removal of that project all together.

Fieldstone Associates

Plainfield Municipal  
Utilities Authority

Waterford Township

Wildwood Business  
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## The Future of Affordable Housing in New Jersey

If you live in New Jersey, chances are you are familiar with the State's affordable housing mandates per the Mount Laurel Doctrine, the Fair Housing Act and the regulatory structure of the Council on Affordable Housing, otherwise known as COAH. You may also be familiar with New Jersey's diminished land availability, increasing budgetary deficits and significant property tax burdens. While significant litigation has been brought upon the Council in past years, little has been accomplished to overhaul the Fair Housing Act to reflect on-the-ground conditions and provide a realistic and sensible approach to affordable housing production.

In 2008, the New Jersey State Legislature, under the primary sponsorship of former Assemblyman Joseph Roberts (D-5), authorized the A500 bill (PL

## COAH News

On February 19th, 2010, the Appellate Division of the New Jersey Supreme Court stayed the portion of Governor Christie's Executive Order 12 which restricted COAH from "taking any further action to process applications for substantive certification or to take any other actions to implement the Third Round Regulations" for a ninety day period. While the Court considers the appeal filed by the Fair Share Housing Network of New Jersey, which challenged the Executive Order, COAH may proceed with reviewing and approving 3rd round petitions. The Housing Opportunity Task Force, created by the Executive Order, will continue its work of reviewing the Fair Housing Act, the State Planning Act and COAH regulations. On the legislative front, Senator Raymond Lesniak has introduced S1 to the Senate Economic Growth Committee. S1 proposes to abolish COAH and transfer its powers, functions and duties to the New Jersey State Planning Commission. For more information on this legislation, read our article featured in this newsletter.

## USDA Rural Development

With a bolster of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding, the USDA New Jersey Rural Development Office is actively seeking applications for projects in Community Facilities along with Water and Waste Disposal projects. Rural Development can provide financial assistance to develop essential community facilities such as police and fire stations, schools, child care centers and health clinics, in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population.

Additionally, Rural Development can assist cities and towns with a population of 10,000 or less to develop water and wastewater systems, including solid waste disposal and storm drainage, in rural areas. The program will also pay for the utilization of alternative energy within the waste and water project.

Financial assistance from USDA comes in the form of a loan and grant program. Their goal is to improve the quality of life and promote economic development in rural America. For more information click [here](#).

## Funding Opportunities

### Target Store Grants

Target stores provide direct funding to schools and nonprofit organizations in the following categories:

- Arts Grants - to bring arts and culture to K-12 students
- Early Childhood Reading - to support after-school reading events and weekend book clubs

2008, c.46) which extinguished Regional Contribution Agreements (RCAs), required municipalities to provide at least 13% of their Third Round affordable housing obligations to very low-income families, created a Regional Affordable Housing Development Planning Program (RAHDPP) and established a standardized 2.5% non-residential development fee to fund affordable housing opportunities. Shortly thereafter, in light of poor economic conditions, former Governor Jon S. Corzine enacted the New Jersey Economic Stimulus Act of 2009, which temporarily suspended the 2.5% non-residential development fee. This suspension only affects projects that receive preliminary or final site plan approval prior to July 1, 2010, provided that the same project receives its building permits prior to January 1, 2013.

Recently, legislators have introduced over thirty (30) legislative bills initiating either amendments to the Fair Housing Act and/or modifications to COAH's rigid regulations and the mechanisms by which affordable housing is credited. Some bills have even gone so far as to abolish COAH. Due to its sweeping change to the State's current structure, the most notable piece of legislation proposed is Senate Bill 1 (S1), as described below.

On January 19, 2010, Senator Raymond J. Lesniak (D-20) introduced S1 to the Senate Economic Growth Committee. In summary, S1 proposes to abolish COAH - the entity

- Field Trip Grants

Arts Grants and Early Childhood Reading applications are due April 30th. The maximum grant is \$2,000. Grant awards will be announced in September. The application for Field Trip Grants will open on August 1, 2010. For more information visit Target's [website](#).

#### **BJ's Foundation**

The mission of the BJ's Charitable Foundation is to enhance and enrich community programs that benefit children and families. The Foundation will grant funding to nonprofit organizations in communities where a BJ's is located for the following programs:

- Hunger Prevention
- Self-Sufficiency for the Homeless
- Healthcare
- Educational and Vocational Opportunities for the Disadvantaged

Applications are accepted throughout the year, but the second quarter deadline is April 9, 2010. Organizations can only submit one application per year. For more information go to BJ's [website](#).

#### **Environmental Grant Program**

Funds are available to promote innovative, community based projects that improve, restore or protect the watersheds, surface water and/or water supplies. Grants of up to \$10,000 will support environmental sustainability activities such as watershed cleanups, reforestation efforts, biodiversity projects, streamside buffer restoration projects, and hazardous waste collection efforts. The application deadline is March 22, 2010. For more information contact Shane Godshall at Triad.

that currently has regulatory authority and provides administrative oversight to the production of the State's constitutional obligation to supply affordable housing. Per the "State Agency Transfer Act," S1 recommends that the powers, functions and duties of COAH be transferred to the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC).

*To read the rest of this article go to the NJ League of Municipalities [website](#).*