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Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Local and Regional Services

2007 Annual Report

Presented to

**the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government
and
the Intergovernmental Advisory Commission**

October 2007

**Department of Administrative and Financial Services
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Introduction

This report is prepared for the Legislature's State and Local Government Committee and the Intergovernmental Advisory Commission in accordance with Title 30-A MRSA §6210.

Funding for this grant program was established as part of the School Finance Act of 2003, the citizens' initiative known as Question 1A and *Public Law 2005, c. 2*, commonly referred to as LD 1. Chapter 2 created the Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Local and Regional Services, a non-lapsing account, which is capitalized by a transfer of 2% of municipal revenue sharing. *Public Law 2007, c. 240 § NNN*, however, limited the program funding to \$500,000.

The Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Local and Regional Services provides grants to encourage and support cooperation among municipalities with the goal of reducing property taxes and, ultimately, lowering Maine's tax burden. The department has run two grant cycles; a pilot program in FY05-06 and a full program in FY07-08. A third cycle will be underway shortly for FY 08-09. This report will provide an update on the status of the three grant cycles in process:

Final Update on FY 05 Pilot Program

Governor Baldacci included funds for regional competitive grants as part of his FY 05-06 budget prior to the transfer of municipal revenue sharing funds envisioned by the citizen's initiative. *Public Law 2003, c. 20, § W-2 (Unified Budget Bill)* established a \$1 million fund to support municipalities in developing joint ventures for delivering municipal services.

These grants were used to pilot the joint delivery of services as one way to reduce local government spending and counteract escalating property taxes. In the fall 2004, the department contracted with the Maine Development Foundation to develop the pilot program and administer the grant funds. Following a competitive process, 13 regional groups were selected to receive collaborative service grants and 13 regions were awarded, smaller planning grants.

From the pilot program, the department submitted legislation that developed the grant program guidelines (LD 1637). With the Legislature's passage of PL 2005, chapter 266, Title 30-A Section 6201, et seq. governs the administration of the program.

The Maine Development Foundation, having administered the pilot program, has evaluated the program results and offers lesson learned in a final analysis of FY 05 Pilot Program provided in conjunction with this report. MDF's Final Report will closeout the FY 05 Pilot Program.

FY 07 Grant Program

A. Funding

With the enactment of PL 2005, Chapter 2, the full program was anticipated to start on November 1, 2005 with the first round of grants through this funding process awarded in early 2006. In June 2005, however, funding for the grant program was suspended for FY 06-07 as part

of *Public Law 2005, c. 457*. Partial funding was restored for FY 07 in the amount of \$500,000 through the Governor's Supplemental Budget codified in *Public Law 2005, c.519, § HH*.

B. Grant Solicitation

In August 2006, the Department solicited grant proposals from Maine's municipalities, counties and regional government subdivisions for the \$500,000 available to the Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Local and Regional Services. In response to this Request for Proposals, 25 applications, totaling over \$1.5 million in requests for funding were received.

C. Grant Administration

The Department of Administrative and Financial Services administers the grant funds in cooperation with the State Planning Office. The department handles the grant RFP process, administers the Fund, and manages the grant contracts. The State Planning Office assists applicants with grant proposals and provides materials and contacts on existing cooperative services efforts that grantees might use to facilitate their proposals.

D. Review Panel

Pursuant to statute, a state-local review panel was appointed by the Governor to evaluate and rank the grant proposals. The panel consisted of the following members:

- T.J. Tavares, Policy Specialist, Department of Economic and Community Development
- Domna Giatas, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Administrative and Financial Services
- John DelVecchio, Legislative Liaison, State Planning Office
- Ken Young, Executive Director, Kennebec Valley Council of Governments
- Janet White, Chair, Board of Selectmen, Town of New Portland
- Susan Lessard, Town Manager, Town of Hampden
- Mike Byron, City Councilor, City of Augusta

The panel provided input on the department's grant guidelines and evaluation criteria. They also reviewed and scored the grant proposals, determined which proposals to fund and the level of funding.

E. Grant Evaluation Criteria

With input from the Review Panel, the following criteria were established:

- Extent and quality of cooperation among governmental entities,
- Estimated amount of property tax savings to the region over time as a percentage of budget(s) and/or the ability for communities in other regions to duplicate such savings (25 Points);
- Degree/likelihood of success in implementing and sustaining a new intergovernmental arrangement (35 Points);
- Extent to which the project can be replicated by other regions in future cooperative endeavors (20 Points); and

- Extent to which the project incorporates innovative and unique solutions or ideas (20 Points).

F. Grant Awards

In October of 2006, grants were awarded to 14 projects totaling \$500,000 with most of the grant contracts executed in February and March of 2006. The grant cycle is scheduled to last 18 months with grant projects anticipated completion by August of 2008. Grant recipients are required to provide interim and final reports, prior to receipt of each installment of grant funds.

Unique to this grant cycle, several projects that were previously awarded planning grants under the Pilot Program are now carrying out the implementation of their projects during this grant cycle. The achievements and obstacles encountered by this group of projects will provide new insights that will prove useful to the future administration of the program and to communities exploring the cooperative services concept, or preparing future proposals.

Regionalization projects vary greatly in terms of cost, scope, complexity, and ease of entry into the partnership. At this juncture in the program, interim reports have yet to be provided, so it is difficult to assess lessons learned and the potential for savings. However, it is important to provide a sense of the types of projects undertaken in this second round of grants. The projects in this grant cycle can be divided into eight broad categories, and a brief summary of each project is included below:

(A complete list of grant projects is provided in Appendix A.)

Collaborative Service Delivery

- **Lewiston – Auburn** (\$152,916) – During the FY 05-06 Pilot Program the cities of Lewiston and Auburn used their grant to identify cooperative efforts between the two cities that would achieve efficiencies and cost savings in municipal operations and service delivery. The grant helped a joint citizen's commission to examine and determine the feasibility of a number of collaborative options. The FY 07 Cooperative Services grant application and subsequent funding has allowed Lewiston-Auburn to move forward with its initiatives by providing the funding to hire a Joint Services Coordinator for a period of 18 months. The coordinator will lead and staff the effort. Consolidation plans that will be implemented include:
 - Code enforcement and planning;
 - Public works and public services;
 - Recreation;
 - Information technology;
 - Public safety and emergency services;
 - Procurement and joint purchasing;
- **Washington County** (\$20,000) – Planning Grant funding awarded to Washington County and it's communities will be used to fund a process that will identifying specific

opportunities to prioritize strategic investments, explore efficiencies and reduce spending at municipal, SAD and county levels. Areas Washington county plans to study include:

- Education;
- Solid waste disposal;
- Assessment;
- Financial management;
- Energy;
- Telecommunications;
- Public works.

Storm Water Management

- **Veazie** (\$75,459) - In the FY 05-06 Pilot Program, the Bangor Area Storm Water Group (BASWG) was formed in the greater-Bangor region and used its planning grant to formalize and enhance the collaborative management of storm water among seven municipalities, two university campuses and the Maine Air National Guard. The group's goal was to tackle an environmental challenge they all share in a cheaper and more effective manner. So far, BASWG has undertaken 11 new regionalized activities and has created thousands of dollars in savings. The Cooperative Services Grant awarded to BASWG in the FY 07 grant program will enable BASWG to implement portions of the plan developed during the last grant cycle. Plans BASWG will implement include:
 - The development of regional recommendations to the Maine DEP that will limit the need for raising property tax revenue;
 - The development of regionally coordinated management plans;
 - Facilitation of a roundtable discussion amongst Maine's four existing storm water collaborations to share successes and lessons learned;
 - Regional research and piloting of storm water tools & technologies;
 - Cost reductions through the development of shared technical training for staff and the development of a coordinated mapping internship program
- **Windham** (\$48,000) - The Inter-local Storm Water Working Group (ISWG) was formed in the Windham area for the purpose of jointly developing and implementing public education programs to meet the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Storm Water Phase II requirements. ISWG represents 13 communities, which have effectively worked together in the initial stages of this project. ISWG has identified educational priorities for each community; researched educational strategies and developed outreach plans for the three focus areas: lawn care, pet waste and new development. The FY 07 grant award allows ISWG to implement major portions of the plan to include:
 - The development and dissemination of public educational materials such as a "How To" guide, presentation materials, advertising brochures and other materials;
 - The continued funding of a professional, neutral facilitator to oversee the implementation phase of the project, ensuring regulatory compliance, providing technical assistance, coordinating program elements and providing assistance for regulatory record keeping and reporting.

Joint Purchasing and Collaborative Service Delivery

- **MidCoast Council for Business Development** (\$37,375) – The MidCoast Council for Business Development and surrounding communities received a cooperative services grant to carry out major aspects of an economic development, joint purchasing and collaborative services project, modeled after the Lewiston-Auburn approach. Preparing for the eventual drawdown and closure of Brunswick Naval Air Station, beginning in 2008, the project seeks to plan and implement four major efforts:
 - Develop an organizational structure that supports economic development, joint service purchasing and interlocal agreements throughout the region;
 - Develop and finalize a series of legally recognized interlocal agreements that address economic development assistance requests, the coordinated use of tax increment financing funds, the development of tax sharing arrangements and coordination of management efforts for the Military Redevelopment Zone;
 - Develop and implement a marketing profile and delivery system for the region to be rolled out before base closure;
 - Develop and implement a joint service purchasing system that will explore primary services, organize their delivery and guide their purchase.

Joint Assessing

- **Cumberland County** (\$10,000) – Cumberland County Government and a number of endorsing municipalities throughout Cumberland County are using the FY 07 grant funds to initiate the planning phase for evaluating the property tax savings/or improvements in services that could be gained by creating a joint property assessing service. A consultant will be hired to evaluate the feasibility of a joint assessing program. The consultant will analyze current operations and expenditures and compare them to projected costs for a joint assessing system. Members of an advisory committee made up of local assessors, municipal officials, IT and financial advisors and county staff will guide data collection, provide input and feedback and develop recommendations based on the consultant's findings.

Recycling and Waste Management

- **Augusta** (\$20,000) – The City of Augusta, in cooperation with the Town of Chelsea, the City of Gardiner, the City of Hallowell and the Town of Manchester have undertaken a Planning Grant project, the goal of which is to improve and expand recycling in the Hatch Hill Region. The grant funds will be used to hire a consultant that will examine the existing systems, evaluate options that are available to improve the existing programs and develop an action plan for improvements to processes and facilities.
- **Skowhegan** (\$18,250) – Receiving a Planning Grant for \$18,250, the Town of Skowhegan, and the Kennebec Council of Governments will use the grant funds to conduct an initial study of existing recycling practices, processes and facilities in Skowhegan and surrounding communities. The study will be used to determine the

feasibility of a shared recycling center with cost savings that can be turned into property tax savings across participating communities.

Joint Dispatch and Emergency Services

- **Rockport** (\$17,500) – Rockport and Camden will be using their Planning Grant award to update a previous study which assessed the viability of a shared policing force between the two communities. Building on the information contained in the old study, the new study will analyze:
 - Current staffing;
 - Department costs;
 - The current workloads;
 - The organizational structures;
 - Union agreements;
 - Future training needs.

The information gained from this analysis will then be used to develop an action plan that will outline the joint governance, organizational structure, salary and benefit guidelines and training requirements for the Joint Force. Additionally, 3-4 financial pro formas will be put forward to reflect the various levels of consolidation that could be pursued.

- **Franklin County** (\$5,500) – The Planning Grant awarded to Franklin County and its communities provides for the participants to carry out several functions related to the planning and development of a Regional Public Safety Communications center. The functions include:
 - Conducting needs assessments;
 - Collection of public comments;
 - Development of presentation materials;
 - Scope of service determination;
 - Evaluation of alternative construction design methods.
- **Freeport** (\$35,000) – Currently, Freeport and Yarmouth operate separate regional dispatch centers that serve populations of 12,867 and 19,048 respectively. Using the Planning Grant funds, the two communities will explore the feasibility of merging the separate dispatch centers into one shared regional dispatch center. Funding provided through this grant will be used to hire a consultant that will review the existing facilities and the proposed facility and evaluate feasibility. Findings will then be reported to the Town Councils, and opened for public comment, discussion and a final decision. The consultants review will explore four key areas:
 - Personnel needs;
 - Equipment needs;
 - Space needs;
 - Service needs.

Regional Economic Development and Tax Sharing

- **Belfast** (30,000) – Planning Grant funds awarded to Belfast, Camden and Rockland will be used in conjunction with other funding provided by the municipalities to explore the feasibility of a regional economic development system that will generate development, increase incomes and expand the tax base, increasing the likelihood of creating property tax savings that can be returned to residents. Areas, the study group will explore include:
 - Regional tax increment financing structures;
 - Regional business property tax sharing mechanisms (for tax revenues from new businesses developed as a part of our regional strategy);
 - Regional business park concepts;
 - Regional smart-growth strategies and regional downtown revitalization planning;
 - Expansion of Pine Tree Zone opportunities in the region;
 - Construction of a regional demographics, workforce, infrastructure and property databases;
 - Establishment of a regional business attraction/marketing strategy;
 - Establishment of Regional Business Technology Incubators;
 - Establishment of regional “Opportunity Zones” and regional “Centers for Excellence”.
- **St. Agatha** (15,000) – Planning Grant funds provided for the Northern Aroostook Regional Airport Economic Development project will be used to conduct a feasibility study and develop a business plan for the development of an economic and tax revenue sharing district at the regional airport. The proposed project will plan for construction of a new hangar facility, and the construction of an on-site resort and restaurant complex on the existing grounds of the airport. In order to proceed with this project a comprehensive study is necessary. The participating entities will contract with a professional firm to carry out the development of the study and plan.
- **South Berwick** (15,000) – Planning Grant funds provided for this project will fund an initial feasibility study that will provide the basis for the implementation and development of an interlocal agreement and eventually, the development of a regional industrial park. Given the size and scope of the project, the participants will be developing a first-in-field interlocal agreement that will serve as a sample for other entities wanting to create an industrial park similar in size. Revenue generated by the park will be apportioned by the communities and will provide property tax savings to residents.

F. Itemized Disbursements

To date, \$165,000 has been distributed to the grantees from the Fund. Funds are distributed in three equal installments. The payments are spread over an 18-month period and payments two and three are contingent upon the submission of interim and final reports respectively. All grant recipients have received the initial payment pursuant to their contract. Several grantees are nearing submission of the interim reports and in one instance the final report. Efforts are made

to be flexible regarding the grant timeframes in order to ensure that the grantees have every opportunity for a successful project.

(A complete list of funds dispersed is included in appendix B.)

FY 08-09 Grant Program

Five hundred thousand (\$500,000) is available for grants in FY 08-09. The grant application is currently under development by the Department of Administrative and Financial Services and will be provided to the Review Panel for comment. Members of the Review Panel for the 08-09 Grant Program, as appointed by the Governor, are as follows:

- Orman Whitcomb, Director, Office of Community Development, Department of Economic and Community Development
- Domna Giatas, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Administrative and Financial Services
- T.J. Tavares, Development Program Manager, State Planning Office
- John Bubier, City Manager, City of Biddeford
- Janet White, Selectmen, Town of New Portland
- Curtis Lunt Town Manager, Retired, Town of Lisbon
- Anne Beebe-Center, Knox County Commissioner

It is anticipated that the request for applications will be issued November 2007 and that grant awards will be made by March 2008. Additional information on these grant awards will be included in the next report.

Conclusion

With \$500,000 in funding restored during the 2005 Supplemental budget process, and continued funding restored during the FY 08-09 budget process the grant program is slated to continue.

Each grant cycle brings many innovative and creative ideas that are being studied and implemented by communities across the state. With the prior grant projects as guides, municipalities, counties and regional government subdivisions are working to develop joint ventures for the delivery of services, create property tax savings, and reduce the overall burden on citizens within service areas.

As projects move forward, they serve as successful examples to other municipalities, counties and regional government subdivisions who may consider shared services or consolidation efforts in the future.

Appendix A

Grant Award Recipients - FY 07 Grant Program					
Project Title	Lead Applicant	Participating Entities	Project Description	Grant Type	Total Amount Awarded
Bangor Area Storm Water Group Implementation	Veazie Project Manager: Allan Thomas, Tax Assessor/Code Enforcement Officer 947-2781 arthomas@veazie.net	Bangor, Brewer, Hamden, Milford, Old Town, Orono, Veazie, University of Maine, Maine Air National Guard at Bangor, University College of Bangor	Seeks funding to implement portions of an existing regional storm water management strategic plan	C	\$ 75,459.00
Camden-Rockport Police Consolidation Study	Rockport Project Manager: Robert A. Peabody, Jr., Town Manager 236-0806 townmanager@town.rockport.me.us	Camden, Rockport	Seeks funding to conduct a feasibility study and produce an action plan for consolidation of the Camden-Rockport police forces	P	\$ 17,500.00
Cumberland County Shared Assessing Feasibility Study	Cumberland County Government Project Manager: Elizabeth Trice, Grants and Special Projects. Coordinator 871-8380 trice@cumberlandcounty.org	Cumberland County	Seeks funding to explore the creation of a shared property assessment program for Cumberland County municipalities.	P	\$ 10,000.00

Franklin County- Regional Public Safety Communications	Franklin County Commissioners Project Manager: Stephan M Bunker, Selectman, Town of Farmington 877-8068 stephan.bunker@maine.gov	Franklin County, Farmington, Wilton, Jay, Franklin Memorial Hospital, University of Maine Farmington, Franklin County Emergency Management Office	Seeks funding for the planning services related to the creation of a consolidated county emergency management office, joint operations center, and joint county and local law enforcement offices	P	\$ 5,500.00
Freeport-Yarmouth Regional Dispatch Center	Freeport Project Manager: Dale Olmstead, Jr., Town Manager 865-4743 dolmstead@freeportmaine.com	Freeport, Pownal, Durham, Yarmouth, Cumberland, North Yarmouth	Seeks funds to conduct a consolidation study of the existing Freeport and Yarmouth dispatch centers	P	\$ 35,000.00
Hatch Hill Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facility	Augusta - Solid Waste Bureau Project Manager: Lesley Jones, P.E. Director of Solid Waste 626-2435 lesley@ci.augusta.me.us	Augusta, Manchester, Gardiner, Hallowell and Chelsea	Seeks funding to conduct studies of an existing recycling program serving the Augusta region and investigate potential improvements and expansion	P	\$ 20,000.00
Knox/Waldo Regional Economic Development Project	Belfast Project Manager: Terry St. Peter, City Manager 338-3870 tstpeter@cityofbelfast.org	Belfast, Rockland, Camden	Seeks funding to explore possible efficiencies generated by establishing a regional economic development system	P	\$ 30,000.00
Lewiston and Auburn Service Consolidation Program	Lewiston-Auburn Economic Growth Council Project Manager: Lucien B. Gosselin, President, LAEGC 784-0161 lgosselin@economicgrowth.org	Lewiston, Auburn and Lewiston-Auburn Economic Growth Council	Seeks funding to implement consolidation of municipal services for code enforcement, planning, public works, public services, recreation, information technology, police, fire, procurement and joint purchasing	C	\$ 152,916.00

MidCoast Council for Business Development and Planning Economic Efficiencies Program	Midcoast Council for Business Development and Planning Project Manager: Jeffrey R. Sneddon, Executive Director 443-5790 mcbdp@mcbdp.org	Bath, Bowdoinham, Brunswick, Harpswell, Richmond, Topsham, West Bath, MidCoast Council for Business Development and Planning	Seeks funding to implement a joint purchasing system, develop interlocal agreements and develop a marketing profile and delivery system for the region	C	\$ 37,375.00
Northern Aroostook Regional Airport Economic Development Planning Grant	St. Agatha Project Manager: Ryan D. Pellitier, Town Manager 543-7305 townmanager@adelphia.net	St. Agatha, Frenchville, Madawaska, Fort Kent	Seeks funding to conduct a feasibility study and develop a business plan for enhancement of an economic and property tax revenue sharing program at the municipally owned airport	P	\$ 15,000.00
Skowhegan Area Regional Recycling Project	KVCOG Project Manager: Kenneth C. Young, Jr., Executive Director 453-4258 x12 kyoung@kvcog.org	Kennebec County Council of Governments and Town of Skowhegan	Seeks funding for an analysis of the benefits of a shared recycling center for Skowhegan and surrounding municipalities	P	\$ 18,250.00
Southern Maine Regional Industrial Park Feasibility Study	South Berwick Project Manager: Jeffrey Grossman, Town Manager 384-3300 jgrossman@sberwick.us	Berwick, Eliot, North Berwick, South Berwick, Kittery and Wells	Seeks funding to conduct an initial feasibility study for the creation of a regional industrial park	P	\$ 15,000.00
Washington County: One Community!	Washington County Commissioners Project Manager (Interim): Christopher Gardner, County Commissioner 255-3127 cgardner26@hotmail.com	Washington County	Seeks funding to prioritize strategic investments, explore efficiencies and reduce overall spending at municipal, SAD and county levels.	P	\$ 20,000.00

Windham Area Interlocal Stormwater Working Group	Windham Project Manager: Anthony T. Plante, Town Manager 892-1907 atplante@windham.me.us	Biddeford, Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland, Falmouth, Freeport, Gorham, Portland, Saco, Scarborough, South Portland, Westbrook, Windham, Yarmouth, Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District	Seeks funding to build Interlocal Stormwater Working Group (ISWG) capacity through joint public education and to obtain a facilitator to manage core collaborative function of the ISWG	C	\$ 48,000.00
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C = Cooperative Services Grant

P = Planning Grant

Appendix B

Dispersed Funds FY 07 Program (As of May 1, 2007)

Project Name	Lead Applicant	Amount Awarded	First Payment	Date Paid	Second Payment	Date Paid	Third Payment	Date Paid	Total Payments
COOPERATIVE SERVICES									
Bangor Area Storm Water Working Group Implementation	Veazie	\$ 75,459.00	\$ 24,901.47	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 24,901.47
Lewiston Auburn economic Growth Council Consolidation Program	Lewiston-Auburn Economic Growth Council	\$ 152,916.00	\$ 50,462.28	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 50,462.28
MidCoast Council for Business Development and Planning Economic Efficiencies Program	MidCoast Council for Business Development	\$ 37,375.00	\$ 12,333.75	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 12,333.75
Windham Area Interlocal Stormwater Working Group	Windham	\$ 48,000.00	\$ 15,840.00	5/1/2007	-				\$ 15,840.00
Subtotal		\$ 313,750.00	\$103,537.50		-		-		\$103,537.50
PLANNING GRANTS									
Cumberland County Shared Assessing Feasibility Study	Cumberland County Government	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 3,300.00	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 3,300.00
Camden-Rockport Police Consolidation Study	Rockport	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 5,775.00	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 5,775.00

Franklin County-Regional Public Safety Communications	Franklin County Commissioners	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 1,815.00	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 1,815.00
Freeport-Yarmouth Regional Dispatch Center	Freeport	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 11,550.00	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 11,550.00
Hatch Hill Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facility	Augusta-Solid Waste Bureau	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 6,600.00	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 6,600.00
Knox/Waldo Regional Economic Development Project	Belfast	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 9,900.00	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 9,900.00
Northern Aroostook Regional Airport Economic Development Planning Grant	St. Agatha	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 4,950.00	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 4,950.00
Skowhegan Area Regional Recycling Project	KVCOG	\$ 18,250.00	\$ 6,022.50	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 6,022.50
Southern Maine Regional Industrial Park Feasibility Study	South Berwick	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 4,950.00	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 4,950.00
Washington County: One Community!	Windham	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 6,600.00	5/1/2007	-		-		\$ 6,600.00
Subtotal		\$ 186,250.00	\$ 61,462.50		-		-		\$ 61,462.50
Total		\$ 500,000.00	\$165,000.00						\$165,000.00
Total Paid to Date	\$ 165,000.00								