



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Commissioners Award Community Partnership Funding to MAP Furniture Bank,  
Community Shelter Board and Mid-Ohio Food Bank**

Today, during the Commissioners' General Session meeting, Franklin County Commissioners approved three Community Partnership Grants for local organizations who enhance the quality of life for Franklin County residents and address community needs that bring together the ideas, energy, and resources of the community.

The Material Assistance Program (MAP) Furniture Bank will receive over \$20,000 to support a community project that relies on the support of local organizations and individuals to "turn empty houses into homes." MAP Furniture Bank, the nation's second largest furniture bank, operates a bulk pick-up and furniture diversion program that helps families in need of housing create and foster a stable family environment. All of the furniture distributed to local families is from a free pick up program.

Furniture is donated by local residents, hotels, colleges and furniture stores. The funding will provide 20 residential pick-ups and 8 deliveries per day and divert approximately 5,000 cubic yards of solid waste from the landfill. MAP expects to serve 4,200 Franklin County families in 2009 and keeps over 35,000 cubic yards of solid waste from entering county landfills each year.

"MAP helps families stay together since children can be removed from a family home for the lack of a bed," said Commissioner Paula Brooks. "This is targeted leveraged spending in tough times to help Franklin County families in need. This has the added 'green' benefit of keeping items out of landfills and recycling them for those in need."

Up to \$3,000,000 will be awarded in a collaborative agreement with the Community Shelter Board (CSB) to provide services to combat homelessness in Franklin County communities. The Community Shelter Board works to develop and implement strategies that decrease homelessness and increase the placement of homeless persons in permanent housing in our community.

The funding will be used to serve 6,978 people under the Emergency Shelter & Housing Services program, have operational 789 units under the Rebuilding Lives Permanent Supportive Housing program and allow CSB to serve as the single coordinating body for a wide range of homeless

service providers in Columbus and Franklin County. This will enable them to work as a system rather than as a fragmented set of resources.

“With our current economic situation in the United States, we are unfortunately seeing more people loose their homes,” said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. “We are working with our partners like the Community Shelter Board to overcome the challenges that come along with homelessness and find more permanent housing solutions for people who would be living on the streets.”

The basic need for nourishing food is out of reach for far too many people in Franklin County. In 2008, Mid-Ohio Food Bank distributed over 15 million pounds of food to 315 agencies in Franklin County alone, the majority of the clients seeking emergency food assistance were working, retired or disabled.

Commissioners will provide support for the Mid-Ohio Food Bank in the amount of \$500,000 to provide food relief for Franklin County residents in need. The funds will be used to collect and distribute food consistently and efficiently to the Franklin County residents who need it through the 535 agencies that the Mid-Ohio Food Bank serves. Additionally, the funds will help increase the cold-storage capability dedicated to fresh produce storage to extend the life of the fresh fruits and vegetables that neighborhood pantries count on. The cold-storage capability will ensure that residents seeking assistance have access to high-quality, nutritious protein, fruits and vegetables.

“Hunger is an issue in our communities,” said Commissioner John O’Grady. “Keeping our kids’ stomachs full of nutritious food is important for their physical and mental growth. Our partnership with the Mid-Ohio Food Bank will help our families receive the fresh produce the children need.”

Representatives from MAP Furniture Bank, Community Shelter Board and the Mid-Ohio Food Bank were present during the General Session meeting (373 S. High St., on the 26<sup>th</sup> Floor) at 9 a.m. to talk about the resources they have available to Franklin County residents.

For more information about these local organizations contact MAP Furniture Bank at (614) 272-9544, the Community Shelter Board at (614) 221-9195 or the Mid-Ohio Food Bank at (614) 274-7770.