

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Grants & Community Development Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Cooperative Agreement for Kaiserman JCC RACP Grant

Prepared by: Brandon J. Ford, Assistant Township Manager

Date: July 25, 2025

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

Authorize execution of a Cooperation Agreement with the Kaiserman Jewish Community Center (JCC) and the Redevelopment Authority of Montgomery County to facilitate the release of a \$500,000 Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to the Kaiserman JCC for facility upgrades and execution of an Indemnity Agreement between the Kaiserman JCC and Lower Merion Township ensuring the Township has no financial liability.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

These types of agreements must be approved by the Board of Commissioners.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):

There is no policy but the Township has historically entered into cooperative and indemnity agreements with other local entities awarded RACP funding.

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

The Kaiserman JCC has been awarded a \$500,000 RACP grant by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for facility upgrades. Specifically, this project will renovate the Main and Preschool Lobbies to enhance building security while also improving the overall aesthetic to create a welcoming and professional environment. In the Preschool Wing, the outdated boiler will be replaced with a new ductless HVAC system and hot water units. Electrical systems will also be upgraded, and classrooms will be weatherproofed to support the new systems and improve comfort. Finally, the Gymnasium floor will be refinished and restriped, and the structural elements will be repaired as needed. A full repainting of the gym will follow, encompassing the underside of the roof deck, all mechanical and fire suppression systems, piping, walls, ceilings, track structure and railings, and all doors and frames. The entire project will be undertaken by the Kaiserman JCC.

The RACP funds will be awarded to Kaiserman JCC from the state through the Redevelopment Authority of Montgomery County, which is typical for the RACP program. Also characteristic of RACP grants to non-governmental entities is the requirement for a cooperation agreement to be executed between the entity and the host municipality (i.e. Lower Merion Township). This cooperation agreement requires the local government to assure repayment of any of the grant funds that might be spent for ineligible activities. This is an odd and seemingly onerous requirement for a local government but is one that the Township has encountered in the past.

The Township addresses this requirement by having the Solicitor prepare an indemnity agreement between the entity receiving the RACP grant and the Township, which guarantees that the grant awardee (Kaiserman JCC) will pay the Township for any such ineligible expenditures. A copy of the proposed Cooperation Agreement as well as the Indemnity Agreement ensuring the Township will not be liable for any ineligible expenditure are attached. The Township Solicitor has reviewed/prepared the agreements and finds them both satisfactory.

V. **Impact on Township Finances:**

There is no impact to Township finances.

VI. **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends the Board of Commissioners authorize execution of the proposed Cooperation Agreement with the Kaiserman JCC and the Redevelopment Authority of Montgomery County to facilitate the release of a \$500,000 RACP grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for facility upgrades as well as the execution of an Indemnity Agreement with the Kaiserman JCC ensuring the Township has no financial liability for this project.