

## Change coming to county home rehab grants

By Dennis Pelham  
Daily Telegram Staff Writer

September 14, 2012 1:00PM

New rules for a housing rehabilitation grant program will keep Lenawee County from spreading the money evenly around the county in the future, county commissioners were told. A dozen townships and cities were included in home rehabilitation and repair projects funded during the current two-year grant cycle, reported Burt Fenby of the Adrian office of the Community Action Agency on Tuesday. The state's rules for the community development block grant program will be different in the next two-year grant cycle that starts Jan. 1, he said.

Half of the county's next \$300,000 grant allocation will have to be targeted for one location as part of a community development plan under Gov. Rick Snyder's "placemaking" initiative, said Fenby. No decisions have been made on where the community development effort in Lenawee County would be targeted, he said.

The other half of the grant funds can still be spent anywhere in the county, he said, on a first-come first-served basis that was followed in the current grant cycle. Commissioners contracted with the Community Action Agency two years ago in an effort to more evenly spread grant funds around the county. The city of Adrian had been the grant administrator in the past.

Fenby asked commissioners to continue the relationship with the Community Action Agency for the next grant cycle. A public hearing on an application for the block grant funds is being scheduled for the commission's Oct. 10 session. Grant money was used over the past two years to rehabilitate homes in Adrian, Adrian Township, Britton, Cambridge Township, Medina Township, Fairfield Township, Raisin Township and Morenci. There were four emergency repair projects in Adrian and one each in Dover Township, Madison Township and Morenci.

Rehabilitation projects are still in the works for houses in Clayton, Hudson and Palmyra. Two emergency repair projects are planned in Morenci. Fenby said he expects a total of \$300,000 to go directly into the repair of low- and moderate-income homes, thanks to partnering with other sources for additional work on the homes. Outside sources are putting in about 30 percent of the money spent directly on repairs and improvements, he said.

About \$40,000 of the \$300,000 in block grant funds goes to administrative costs. So far, according to Fenby's report, \$209,399 has been spent on eight rehabilitation projects and \$40,061 on emergency home repairs.