Columbus and Franklin County Continuum of Care Project Development Process Information Packet

Community Shelter Board (CSB) and the Continuum of Care (CoC) have two funding goals:

⟨ To provide capital and development support to agencies seeking to create new permanent housing projects for long-term homeless and disabled adults in Franklin County.

⟨ To provide annual support to permanent housing projects for formerly homeless individuals in the City of Columbus and Franklin County. The purpose is to assure that homeless individuals have a means to end their homelessness under the community's plan to prevent and end homelessness.

Funding is provided by CoC members, as well as through other local, state and federal sources. These sources include:

⟨ City and County HOME/CDBG and Rebuilding Lives RETF
⟨ CMHA vouchers and public housing
⟨ HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) program
⟨ United Way of Central Ohio
⟨ ADAMH services grants
⟨ Affordable Housing Trust Loans

As the fiscal administrator of the CoC, CSB is responsible for reviewing potential projects for viability and serving as the liaison between applicants and the CoC approval process. CSB may also serve as the administrator of project funding, once it becomes operational. The following funders provide support for services and certain other costs associated with operating permanent housing through CSB:

⟨ City of Columbus
⟨ Franklin County
⟨ HUD
⟨ State of Ohio
⟨ United Way of Central Ohio
⟨ Other private donors

While funding typically is administered on a July 1 funding cycle with a single request for proposal process, CSB and CoC recognize project development can take two to three years. Agencies interested in developing new supportive housing must work within the parameters established by the CoC during the development and funding process, from the concept stage to project opening.

Application Process
⟨ Concept Paper
⟨ Project Plan or HUD CoC project application
⟨ Quarterly Updates and Project Plan Updates
⟨ CSB Funding and/or other funding
⟨ CSB Renewal

Concept Paper and Project Plan Definitions
⟨ Project Sponsor – Lead applicant organization; has principal responsibility for development, operations, and services

⟨ CoC Funds – Funds that your agency has either been awarded, intends to apply for, or has pending. These funds come from CoC members.

⟨ Co-Applicant – Any organization committing resources essential to project development, services, and/or operations, or which is directly providing development, services, housing, and/or operations

⟨ Project Partner – Any organization providing resources which are helpful, but not essential to a project for development, services, housing, and/or operations.

New Project Submission
The CoC may consider new projects at any time. Start-up funding may be granted in the middle of a funding cycle, but renewal funding will be aligned with the designated funder's fiscal year. New projects must first submit a Concept Paper that outlines the general project concept, projected CoC capital and services funding request, and basic information about the proposing agency's organizational capacity. The CoC must approve the Concept Paper.

After the CoC approves the Concept Paper, the agency must submit a Project Plan (or CoC project application, if applicable) that includes detailed information about the development, operations, supportive services, capital, and budgets. The initial submission should be as complete as possible, but may be incomplete if the project is not yet fully developed. This prerequisite ensures that the project is consistent with CoC criteria and requirements.

Once the Project Plan is approved, submission of quarterly updates for CoC review and approval are required. Quarterly updates allow CoC members to stay abreast of new developments for the purposes of long-range planning. Periodic Project Plan updates may also be required so that the CoC can plan for the project's funding needs and work with the agency to secure matching funds. The CoC expects that projected service costs will not substantially increase at implementation. Quarterly updates provide a venue for agencies to communicate funding needs to the CoC.

If there are any substantial changes to the project that have modified the service modalities, target population, service partners, community acceptance plan, and other details related to

operations before project implementation, the CoC will require a final Project Plan incorporating all changes or new information which is usually provided in the quarterly updates.

Templates and instructions for the Concept Paper and Project Plan are available on CSB's website here. Contact CSB Grants and Compliance Director Heather Notter at hnotter@csb.org or 614-715-2542 with any questions.

Timeline

Activity	Timing
Submit Concept Paper	Anytime during the year
CoC approves Concept Paper	One of the CoC's meetings
Submit Project Plan or CoC project application	Within 90 days of Concept Paper approval, or per CoC deadlines
Secure Section 8 vouchers, if applicable	Prior to the Project Plan approval
CoC approves Project Plan	One of the CoC's meetings
Submit tax credit application to Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA)	Applications due in February. Secure CoC approval prior to submitting the tax credit application to OHFA.
OHFA approves tax credits	OHFA decision in June
Application due to HUD	Applications due in summer
Project Plan revisions	ongoing

CSB Renewal Funding

Initial funding commitments made through CSB typically are eligible for annual renewal funding. CSB issues grants in one-year commitments (pro-rated if during the fiscal year) based on funding available to CSB from its funding sources. If the project has met performance goals and complied with CSB's Partner Agency standards, it will be eligible for renewal funding. The Partner Agency standards are located on CSB's website here. CSB's funders determine availability of funds; there is no funding guarantee.

Agencies must meet the below criteria to be eligible for CoC funding. Details are available at www.csb.org.
1. The agency must be a registered non-profit
2. The agency must operate within Franklin County
3. If the agency is applying for CSB funding the agency must submit:
   ⟨ IRS non-profit determination letter
   ⟨ Current roster of Board of Trustees
   ⟨ Most recent audited financial statement and management letter
   ⟨ City of Columbus Solicitation Permit
   ⟨ Registration as a Non-profit with the City of Columbus
   ⟨ Secretary of State Registration as Ohio Not-For-Profit (statement of continued existence)

⟨ Initial Registration with the Ohio Attorney General's Charitable Foundations Section
⟨ Annual Financial Filing with the Ohio Attorney General (copy of check)
⟨ Most recent 990

4. The projects must propose to serve an <u>eligible population</u>. Once a project is operational, the agency must verify that the tenants are eligible at the time of acceptance and move-in.

5. Applicants must complete a <u>Community Acceptance Plan</u>, unless the project is scattered sites and does not have a unit concentration in a particular neighborhood. Prior to submitting a concept paper, review the community acceptance materials to ensure that the project will be able to comply with the requirements.

6. If the project receives CoC funds, the agency will enter into an agreement with CSB that requires:
   ⟨ Data Entry into Columbus ServicePoint (CSP), our community's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
   ⟨ Submission of annual budgets for supportive services and operations
   ⟨ Submission and reporting of annual financial information
   ⟨ Acceptance of annual Program Outcome Plans and submission of a Program Description Form
   ⟨ Compliance with CSB Partner Agency Standards
   ⟨ Participation in the community's Unified Supportive Housing System (USHS)

<u>Note to New Applicants:</u> CSB recognizes that the administrative burden of becoming a funded partner can seem overwhelming. CSB's requirements are driven by funders' requirements and the drive to maintain a high level of accountability to the community. Applicants should assess whether they would be able to achieve certification under the [Partner Agency Standards](#) and be able to operate in conformance with the Ends Policies. If the answer to either of these questions is no, please do not proceed with the application.

Assumptions
The following assumptions drive the application process.

⟨ Competitive – Agencies should examine the program design and costs to assure that programs are high quality and cost effective. The CoC evaluates requests for funding against existing projects and other proposed projects for cost-effectiveness and ability to meet program expectations. The CoC will only select programs that demonstrate efficiency, accountability, and sustainability to receive funding.

⟨ Efficiency – The goal is to create efficiencies not just for CSB and its partner agencies, but for the system as a whole. The CoC reviews programs on cost per unit basis that examines the overall cost to serve clients and achieve positive outcomes. The CoC has compiled unit cost data for the various types of permanent housing models and client populations within the overall target population. Projects that are not within the established cost parameters may be more closely examined to identify cost efficiencies.

⟨ Accountability – Accountability is a core value, particularly in times of tight resources. As a system, the CoC and its partners must provide increased accountability to funders and the community to demonstrate that we are making the best use of funds, serving the maximum number of households possible, and providing quality services and safe environments for homeless persons in our community.

⟨ Sustainability – For permanent supportive housing, the goal is to provide long-term housing with tailored support services to long-term homeless and disabled individuals who may have had trouble sustaining housing on their own. CSB and the CoC recognize that permanent supportive housing requires a long-term funding commitment to ensure that agencies can continue operating affordable housing. The established unit cost matrix is designed to contain costs and predict long-term project sustainability. While funding is administered on an annually renewable basis, staying within the cost parameters for permanent supportive housing allow funders to budget for the community's long-term housing needs.

Funding Categories

⟨ Capital Costs: CSB does not provide direct financial support for capital costs, but does serve as the liaison to the CoC. Include information on capital funding, such as project budgets and anticipated sources of funding, in the Project Plan.

⟨ Development Costs: CSB does not provide direct financial support for development costs, but does serve as the liaison to the CoC. Include information regarding development costs, such as project budgets and anticipated sources of funding, in the Project Plan.

⟨ Operations and Services Costs: Projects that receive approval will be eligible for supportive services grants from a CSB-administered pool of funds used primarily for supportive services costs. Eligible costs include support service and direct client assistance. Costs associated with operating a permanent housing project are also eligible. Medicaid eligible services provided to Medicaid eligible clients are not considered eligible costs (e.g., mental health diagnostic and individual treatment services). Include initial projections for services funding requests from the CoC in the Concept Paper.

Cost Categories for the Project Plan Budgets

⟨ Capital and Development Expenses: A pro forma is required in the Project Plan. This category includes costs associated with capital and development outlays for building a permanent supportive housing project.

⟨ Operations Expenses: A ten year pro forma is required in the Project Plan. This category includes costs to operate a program not specifically related to the provision of supportive services to clients, including rent subsidies, utilities, rent or mortgage expenses, maintenance, marketing and leasing, and insurance. Other costs can

include staff required for basic program operations, such as front desk staff that do not provide services to clients, maintenance staff, or property management staff. Administrative costs associated with operations may also be included on this budget.

⟨ Service Expenses: A ten year pro forma is required in the Project Plan. This category includes costs associated with providing services to clients, including salaries and fringe benefits for social service staff. Other costs may include supplies, training, travel reimbursement, and client assistance funds used to directly benefit clients, with the exception of rent subsidies, which are an operating expense. This category also includes contracts with consultants who provide services to clients.

Expectations

All CoC programs must operate within the CSB Partner Agency Standards. CSB funding should represent only a portion of the costs necessary to operate the project. Agencies should work with partners to obtain rent subsidies, supportive services, and other operating subsidies. In addition to the program outcome plans, the CoC expects permanent housing projects to establish tenants' councils to gather resident input on operations and services and to encourage resident participation on the Citizens Advisory Council.

⟨ Eligible Activities: Eligible activities include case management; peer counseling; linkage and referral to substance abuse treatment and mental health treatment; assistance with obtaining, maintaining, or upgrading employment; improving resident self-sufficiency; and other services related to helping residents maintain stable housing. CSB funded activities may not include mental health treatment, alcohol and substance abuse treatment, and/or medical services that are covered by other funding sources. Both permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing projects should make services available to tenants on a voluntary basis.

⟨ Client Admission: Permanent housing initiatives are designed to create housing for those with the greatest barriers to traditional housing, including traditional low-income housing. Admission criteria and the tenant selection plan must take into account the socio-economic histories of the client population. Permanent supportive housing is designed to serve and must prioritize individuals and families meeting federal Chronic Homeless eligibility criteria. Many homeless individuals and families have barriers to housing in the form of poor credit history, poor rental histories with multiple evictions, and criminal backgrounds. Entry standards should not exclude those persons with multiple issues. Nor should persons with other issues, such as severe mental disability or alcohol or drug addiction, be summarily prohibited entry into housing. All programs are required to adhere to all fair housing codes, regulations, and laws.

⟨ Voluntary Services: Participation in disability-related supportive services must be voluntary and cannot be a stipulation of tenancy. The CoC encourages agencies to offer service based on an "irresistible services" model, which makes services so appealing to its client base that they participate voluntarily. The CoC also encourages

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agencies to explore engagement strategies that can be incorporated into the design of program services associated with the housing. Examples of disability-related services include, but are not limited to, mental health services, outpatient health services, and medication provision (as provided to a person with a disability to address a condition caused by that disability). Participation in supportive services that are not disability-related may be required as a condition of the program, if clients are at or have been at imminent risk of eviction and services are necessary to maintain tenancy. (e.g., protective payee).

〈 Affordability: Housing must be affordable to its tenants. Agencies should not expect that tenants will enter the housing paying fair market rent. CSB can assist in identifying sources of rent subsidy, though responsibility for application lies with the agency.

  o Permanent supportive housing: While tenants are expected to pay a portion of the cost to occupy the housing, permanent supportive housing generally is subsidized. Agencies seeking to create a permanent supportive housing project will need to seek on-going rent subsidy commitments through a variety of sources, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and other sources. Residents are expected, but may not be required, to pay rent. Residents with a cash income and a Section 8 voucher are required to pay rent. The tenant portion of rent and utilities should not exceed 30% of the monthly adjusted gross income, 10% of annual gross income, or the portion of any public assistance designated for housing costs, whichever is greater.

  o Rapid re-housing: Short-term rent subsidies do not require a tenant contribution, but longer-term subsidies may add a tenant contribution component.

〈 Landlord – Tenant Relationships: The relationship between landlord and tenant in a permanent housing project may be more intimate than a typical landlord-tenant relationship because of the nature of the housing. Often staff will have to be in close contact with tenants and interact with them regularly. Regardless, the relationship between landlord and tenant is still governed by all applicable landlord/tenant laws and Fair Housing regulations. If this is the first time an agency has developed housing or served as a landlord, CSB strongly encourages research into fair housing practices and landlord/tenant law.

〈 Target Population:

  o Permanent supportive housing: The target population is single men, women, and families experiencing long-term homelessness with a member who has identified special needs (disabilities). Clients must be homeless at the time of program admission. Clients also must meet the prioritization criteria for long-term homeless as defined by HUD. Via USHS, all projects will prioritize households that meet Chronic Homeless eligibility criteria. Additional

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information on USHS and chronic homelessness eligibility is available on CSB's website [here](#).

- o Rapid re-housing: The target population is families and individuals experiencing homelessness who cannot exit homelessness on their own or through other assistance within a short period (7-10 days) and who need focused individualized assistance to quickly security and stabilize in permanent housing.