

## City of Burlington Housing Trust Fund (HTF) Project Award Application

<b>APPLICANT ORGANIZATION</b> Committee On Temporary Shelter (COTS)
<b>CONTACT NAME</b> Tamira Martel, Corporate and Foundations Relationship Manager
<b>DAYTIME PHONE &amp; E-MAIL</b> (802) 540-3084 ext. 208 ; tamiram@cotsonline.org
<b>NAME OF PROJECT</b> The Wilson – A Home For All
<b>AMOUNT REQUESTED</b> \$30,000
<b>ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION START DATE</b> May 2020
<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE</b> June 2020
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST</b> \$166,529.92
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS</b> 23
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST / TOTAL NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS (PER UNIT COST)</b> \$166,530 / \$7,240

Is the applicant a corporation, partnership or individual who is delinquent, at the time of application, in the payment of property taxes or impact fees to the City of Burlington, who have been convicted of arson, who have been convicted of discrimination in the sale or lease of housing under article IV of this chapter or under the fair housing laws of the State of Vermont, or who have pending violations of current city electrical, plumbing, building or housing codes or zoning ordinances?

- Yes  
 No

Will the proposed housing project be perpetually affordable?

- Yes  
 No

Will the proposed housing project be affordable for 10-40 years?

- Yes  
 No

### Project Narrative

Funding priority goes to projects which respond to requirements of the Housing Trust Fund and the City of Burlington's affordable housing priorities. The Housing Trust Fund Administrative Committee (HTFAC) uses the attached criteria to score projects. Scores are tallied and ranked high to low. The HTFAC funds projects at its discretion.

Please describe how the project addresses community need:

Please see Attachment A.: COTS Project Narrative-COTS The Wilson – A Home For All

Please describe how the project would impact the community:

Please see Attachment A.: COTS Project Narrative-COTS The Wilson – A Home For All

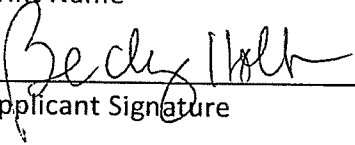
Signature Page

Please check each box that applies:

- Good Standing:** I certify that I am in “good standing” with respect to, or in full compliance with a plan to pay any and all taxes due to the City of Burlington.
- Certification:** Under penalties of perjury, I declare that the information I have provided, to the best of my knowledge and belief, is true, correct, and complete.

Becky Holt, COTS Development Director

Print Name



Applicant Signature

11/25/19

Date

- Increase the cleanliness of the space through the use of commercial-grade materials and installation techniques that ease maintenance burdens.

Our plan to remodel the existing communal bath on the second floor has several advantages:

- Increasing accessibility for an aging resident population through the removal of trip hazards and the implementation of ADA standards and Universal Design elements;
- Increasing privacy, through the creation of two private, single-use bathrooms vs. one unisex, multi-user facility. This change increases COTS' ability to respond to residents' unique needs, e.g., female and transgender residents;
- Increase the cleanliness of the space through the use of commercial-grade materials and installation techniques that ease maintenance burdens.

**Please describe how many households at or below 80% of AMI will be served by the project:**

100% of households residing at The Wilson (23) are below 80% AMI

**Please describe how many households at or below 50% of AMI will be served by the project:**

100% of households residing at The Wilson (23) are below 50% AMI

**Please describe how the City has already demonstrated its interest and support through the investment of CDBG funds, the provision of technical assistance, and/or acquisition of site control for the proposed housing project:** N/A

**Please describe how the application supports one or more of the priorities listed in the City's Housing Action Plan:** Assisting COTS with much-needed renovations to The Wilson will help the City achieve its goal listed in Section I., Item 1. of the City's Housing Action Plan (CHAP): "Continue to Prioritize Affordable Housing Preservation." The Wilson provides permanent, low-cost housing for formerly homeless adults with low- or extremely-low AMI. Funds received through this grant opportunity will enhance COTS' ability to continue to deeply subsidize monthly rents for those tenants who do not reside in a project-based unit at The Wilson. Thereby increasing their stability and helping to reduce their risk of homelessness. A grant award will help reduce the strain on COTS' limited building reserves ensuring the continued operation of this vital community resource and the protection this historic asset.

Renovations at The Wilson will help the City achieve their goal of increasing energy efficiency as outlined in Section I., Item 5.: "Improve Home Energy Efficiency" of the CHAP. Replacement of the windows at The Wilson will reduce the overall energy consumption of the building, while increasing the aesthetic appeal, ease of use, and comfort for our residents. With the installation of new LED fixtures, we will realize savings in consumption of electricity, and the installation of low-flow toilets and shower heads will help decrease annual water consumption. These energy-efficiency upgrades will help reduce our annual operating and maintenance costs on the building, which will free up COTS' resources for direct services to residents.

**Please describe how the proposed project supports an underserved and vulnerable population:** The Wilson serves some of our most vulnerable community members – formerly homeless men (79%) and women (21%) with few, if any, social or familial supports to access in times of stress. Several residents are veterans, medically fragile, disabled or elderly trying to maintain housing on deficient fixed incomes. The Wilson offers deeply-affordable, permanent housing for people moving from life on the streets to sustainable independence in a space of their own. Tenants range in age from their 20's into their 70's with 53 being the average age. Native Americans (5%) and African Americans (15%), extremely low- and low-income individuals are represented among our residents.

Many tenants struggle with ongoing issues that make finding and maintaining permanent housing a significant challenge. A substantial percentage – 28% – are in recovery from substance abuse and working to maintain their sobriety. Of our current residents, 33% have a chronic health condition; 36% a physical disability; 14% a developmental disability; and 51% are dealing with a mental health issue.

The Wilson is dedicated to those who are coming out of homelessness, which is traumatic in and of itself, and the majority of our tenants have experienced multiple forms of trauma in their lifetime. Our goal is to create, on a holistic level, a calm, supportive environment in which our tenants may recover from the trauma of homelessness. To this end we will employ the concepts of Trauma-Informed Design (TID) throughout this entire renovation. TID is a paradigm shift in which the combinations of proper lighting including color spectrum and warmth, along with soothing colors on walls, the incorporation of natural elements, the special layout of physical spaces, and controlled visual interest work in concert to have a positive overall effect on those who have experienced trauma.

**Please describe the experience of the development team:** COTS is an award-winning and nationally recognized nonprofit. We are the largest service provider in Vermont for people who are homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless, serving more than 2,300 people this past year. The breadth and depth of COTS' services, programs, and access to community partners are unmatched in this area.

Two years ago, we completed an extensive \$7.6 million renovation and addition to our administrative building, COTS 95 North Avenue, located in the Old North End of Burlington. This complex project involved a dynamic partnership with Housing Vermont that combined housing tax credits along with federal, state, municipal, and private funding to create 14 new units of permanently affordable housing in addition to the renovation of a 126-year-old historic building to accommodate multiple COTS programs. In 2011, COTS previously partnered with Housing Vermont and the Veterans Administration on our successful Canal Street Veterans Housing project. The cost of this project was more than \$5.6 million.

COTS's leadership team is organized in functional roles, providing needed oversight of all aspects of this project:

Director of Facilities, Jonathan Farrell: Responsible for management of the overall bidding process for the project components, as well as recommendation of qualifying contractors. He will oversee all project work, approves project invoices for payment and ensures that the final completed work is consistent with original plans.

Through direct improvements to our properties, your support will impact the lives of those we serve by helping to ensure not only their health and safety, but the dignity of the people who reside in COTS' housing. Individuals like "Mark":

"Mark" has a physical disability and had been struggling with homelessness since for several years. "Mark" also grappled with a drug addiction - as he would self-medicate looking to relieve the physical pain from his disability and the stress of being homeless. "Mark" also had a felony conviction before coming to COTS making it even more challenging for him to find affordable, permanent housing. In the fall of 2018 he made the decision to come to the Waystation, COTS emergency shelter for single-adults, and really focus on achieving and maintaining his sobriety and securing permanent housing. "Mark" worked with his COTS housing navigator diligently for several weeks, but was unable to secure permanent housing. Fortunately a unit at The Wilson became available with an occupancy date just a few weeks into the future. "Mark" now has a nice sun-filled room with a view of Lake Champlain, and he recently added a bird feeder right outside his window. A few months ago at a community dinner held for residents of The Wilson "Mark" shared with all in attendance that, "Bill (COTS' live-in manager at The Wilson) and all the residents have made me feel accepted and given me community, you've helped me stay sober."

