

I. Demonstrated Need

1. What is the need/opportunity being addressed by this program/project and how does that contribute to CDBG's national objectives?

This application is for the expansion of the Feeding Chittenden building at 228 No Winooski Ave. through the construction of a two-story addition for additional program and administrative space. A CDBG-funded project to renovate the existing space to accommodate the Community Resource Center was completed last fall.

The program/project addresses the urgent and growing needs of individuals experiencing homelessness, housing instability, and food insecurity in Chittenden County. It aligns with CDBG's national objectives, specifically focusing on Objective 1.b (serving low and moderate-income clientele) and Objective 3 (meeting urgent community needs). The project directly responds to the increasing demand for essential services, aligning with CDBG's mission to improve the living conditions and economic opportunities for low-income individuals and communities.

II. Program/Project Design

1. Give us a short summary (2 sentences) that describe the program/project.

The Champlain Housing Trust will work on behalf of CVOEO to construct a two-story addition to the Feeding Chittenden building to better accommodate the staffing and services of the food shelf and Community Resource Center (CRC). The first floor of the addition will expand the food shelf dining room and CRC program space and the second floor will allow administrative staff to return to the building after being relocated off-site to accommodate the CRC.

2. Explain why the program activities are the right strategies to use to achieve the intended outcomes. Why is the program designed the way it is? (cite evidence, best practices, or community input)

The CRC meets critical needs for people experiencing homelessness – a warm (or cool) place to be during the day with access to food, clothing, computers, emergency housing resources, essential services and support in accessing public benefits. The co-location of the center at Feeding Chittenden has been very successful, but the building was not designed to comfortably accommodate the growing number of people needing meals and services. Feeding Chittenden also operates the emergency grocery distribution and the Community Kitchen Academy and so the building is a continual hub of activity. CRC is in the right place at Feeding Chittenden – it's a central, accessible location and CVOEO provides the rent, operation costs and food as a matching cost - but even after renovations, more space is needed to accommodate staff and programming. The proposed two-story addition will provide expanded program space on the first floor, administrative offices and meeting space on the second floor, a redesigned parking lot for safer pedestrian access, and a second entrance to separate CRC/hot meal programs access from the grocery program.

3. How will this program/project contribute to the City's anti-poverty strategy? If this activity is to respond to COVID-19, please also describe how this activity prepares or responds to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Two key components of the City's anti-poverty strategy include (1) meeting basic needs and stabilizing living situations, including access to and retention of safe, decent and healthy, affordable housing and to income supports and (2) decreasing social isolation and increasing social capital. Both of these key components are directly addressed by the work of the Community Resource Center. Addressing the basic needs of people without homes (including those living on the streets, in encampments and in cars) providing food, clothing, a safe space to meet with advocates and service providers and facilitating access to shelter and homes – is a critical first step in an anti-poverty strategy. While this project isn't directly in response to the pandemic, the pandemic did drastically increase the number of people experiencing homelessness. From 2022 to 2023, nationally homelessness increased by 12% and in Vermont it rose by 18.5% (HUD, Annual Homeless Assessment Report, 12/2023). Due to changes in state run programs for people experiencing homelessness we can expect the number of people experiencing homelessness to rise over the next year, and as pandemic era 3SquaresVT emergency allotment benefits ended in February 2023 (statewide, a loss of roughly \$6 million in benefits per month, according to the State), we expect the need for meal services and emergency grocery distribution will also increase. The CRC and Feeding Chittenden are needed now more than ever.

4. How do you use community and/or participant input in planning the program design and activities?

Community input is incorporated through direct interactions with service users, a thorough community needs assessment conducted by the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO), and collaboration with social service partners. Ongoing engagement with stakeholders and feedback from participants play a crucial role in shaping program design, ensuring that the project meets the evolving needs of the population it serves.

III. Proposed Outcomes

1. What are the intended outcomes for this project/program? How are people meant to be better off as a result of participating?

The requested funding will allow us to expand the size of the building by approximately 2,000 square feet, helping to improve the capacity and level of services for two existing, very active programs - the CRC and Feeding Chittenden. The intended outcomes include improved access to essential services, expanded program space, increased capacity to serve individuals, enhanced job training opportunities, and a reduction in social isolation. Participants are meant to be better off by having access to a dignified and comfortable environment, nutritious meals, and comprehensive support on their path to stable housing and economic stability. Bringing administrative staff back to the building will allow for more efficient delivery of services.

2. List your goals/objectives, activities to implement and expected outcomes (# of units, # of individuals, etc.)

In 2022, Feeding Chittenden served 27,438 meals and provided over 2 million pounds of food to 10,763 individuals (4,090 of whom were Burlington residents). The Community Kitchen Academy graduated 13 individuals who were prepared for jobs in the food industry. The goal of this expansion is to better accommodate the CRC while not compromising these existing critical services. On a daily basis, the CRC welcomes 90 to 140 individuals for meal service, basic needs and advocacy services. Expanding the space to provide offices and meeting space on a second floor will allow programming to expand into more of the ground floor and better accommodate people congregating and receiving the resources, assistance and respite they need. It will allow the Community Kitchen Academy, which provides important job training for low-income people including new Americans, to better serve the trainees. The facility is conservatively projected to serve approximately 500 Burlington households with meals/groceries and 200 Burlington households with services related to being unhoused.

IV. Impact / Evaluation

- 1. How do you assess whether/how program participants are better off? Describe how you assess project/program outcomes; your description should include: what type of data, the method/tool for collecting the data, from whom you collect data, and when it is collected.**

Assessment involves data on the number of individuals served, services provided, and progress reports submitted by the CRC to the State of Vermont. Data is collected quarterly, including progress, outcomes and feedback from service users and insights from community engagement efforts. Outcome evaluation includes measuring the success of job training programs, improvements in housing stability, and overall well-being of participants. The hot meals and grocery programs track the number of meals served, pounds of groceries distributed and number of overall people served including demographic information.

- 2. How successful has the project/program been during the most recent reporting year for your CDBG project? Report the number of beneficiaries you intended to serve with which activities (as noted in your last Attachment A) and your final outcomes (as noted on your Attachment C) from June 2023 (or June 2022). For non-CDBG participants – report on your achievements from the previous year.**

The programs offered at Feeding Chittenden provide for critical human needs – food and shelter from the elements. They also help people improve their lives through assistance in accessing public benefits and housing and providing job training.

Feeding Chittenden meals served: 27,438
Feeding Chittenden pounds of food distributed: 2 million
Community Kitchen Academy graduates: 13
Community Resources Center participants: 100 on average daily

V. Experience / Organizational Capacity

- 1. What is your agency's mission, and how do the proposed activities fit with your mission?**

The Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) addresses fundamental issues of economic, social, racial, and environmental justice and works with people to achieve economic independence.

The Champlain Housing Trust is a Community Land Trust that supports the people of Northwestern Vermont and strengthens their communities through the construction and stewardship of permanently affordable homes and related community assets.

The partnership between CHT and CVOEO on the Feeding Chittenden building dates to 1994 when together we raised the funds to construct the facility. Then as now, the organizations work together to serve people in need – CHT focused on the building and CVOEO focused on the services provided therein. Both organizations work to combat poverty and provide basic services and opportunity to people and families with low incomes.

2. Explain how your agency has the capacity to carry out the proposed activity (i.e. staff qualifications, years of experience related to this type of activity, etc.)

CVOEO has decades of experience providing the emergency services of Feeding Chittenden to the community and the Champlain Housing Trust will manage the construction project. CHT currently owns the building and has many decades of experience with construction projects such as this. CHT is currently finishing up a renovation project at Tim’s House, an emergency shelter in St. Albans that is operated by CVOEO. That complicated renovation includes major changes to the building lay-out to convert the congregate shelter into individual, private rooms all while the program remains operational and partially occupied. The first phase of renovations to the Feeding Chittenden building using CDGB funding has been successfully completed and the same team is in place for this expansion project.

3. What steps has your organization/board taken in the past year to address racial equity, inclusion, and belonging internally? What new commitments have been made to address racial equity, inclusion, and belonging internally in the year ahead?

CVOEO has been an anti-racist agency since its creation in 1965 and a strong advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion. CVOEO considers racism a public health emergency and decided to formalize its commitment to racial justice in 2020 by creating a Racial Equity Committee (made up of 26 staff) and the position of Director of Racial Equity. The organization is involved in a variety of local and statewide initiatives to address racial justice and has adopted a very strong Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Code of Conduct.

CHT is equally as committed to fighting racism and creating an inclusive community. This is especially important to CHT as a housing organization because the real estate industry has a long history of racial exclusion that has led to the wealth and opportunity disparities we live with today. CHT continually reviews all internal policies and programs to screen for racial bias and affirmatively promotes fair housing and inclusion. CHT has made a strong commitment to increasing homeownership opportunities for BIPOC people through the development of a new Housing Equity Program which provides homebuyer assistance including special down payment assistance to BIPOC households. This year, we are expanding access to that program across the state.

**4. Have you received Federal or State grant funds in the past three years? Yes
 No**

5. Were the activities funded by these sources successfully completed? X Yes No
 N/A

If No, please explain:

VI. Proposed Low & Moderate Income Beneficiaries

1. Will the program solely serve a specific group of people? If so, check ONE below:

- Abused Children Elderly (62 years +) People with AIDS
 Battered Spouses Homeless Persons Illiterate Adults
 People with Severe Disabilities

If this activity/project is designed to serve the population experiencing homelessness through housing or supportive services, is your organization or entity partnered with the Chittenden County Continuum of Care and participating in the Coordinated Entry system for the project:

- Yes No Not applicable to activity/project

2. a. For your proposed project, please estimate how the Burlington residents will break out into the following income categories during the total grant period. Use the Income Table at <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CEDO/2023-HUD-Income-Limits>

Service / Activity	Unduplicated Total # of Burlington HH / Persons to be Served	# Extremely Low-Income (30% median)	# Very Low-Income (50% median)	# Low-Income (80% median)	# Above Income Limits (above 80% median)
Groceries and Meals	500 HH	400 HH	100 HH		
Homeless Outreach Services	200 HH	200 HH			

b. All CDBG grantees serving limited clientele will be required to use CEDO’s *CDBG Beneficiary Self-Certification* form to collect beneficiary data including race, ethnicity, annual income, and family size. Is your organization willing and prepared to add this documentation to the intake process for your CDBG funded program by July 1, 2024?

- X Yes NO Not Serving Limited Clientele

VII. Commitment to Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

1. Who is the project/program designed to benefit? Describe the project/program’s target population, citing (if relevant) specific age, gender, income, community/location, race or ethnicity, or other characteristic of the people this program is intended to serve. How do you select and reach your target population?

Feeding Chittenden is the largest emergency food provider in Vermont and has worked for decades at this location to alleviate hunger by feeding people and cultivating opportunity. The food

shelf provides a week's supply of groceries to local families and individuals experiencing food insecurity; the hot meal program provides a hot meal every day to anyone in need; the Community Kitchen Academy is a culinary job training program that teaches students with low incomes the professional and interpersonal skills they need to find jobs in the food/hospitality industries. All of these programs are offered to people regardless of age, race or ethnicity, or gender expression. Outreach regarding these critical programs is mostly through the network of social services partners working with people who are food insecure.

The Community Resource Center within Feeding Chittenden serves people experiencing homelessness including individuals living on the streets, in cars and in encampments as well as people living in shelters and the marginally housed regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, or ability. The CRC includes three Housing Advocates that provide people access to mainstream resources, shelter and permanent housing. CVOEO's Street Outreach team works closely with the CRC Housing Advocates to seek out people living outside or in cars and refer them to the CRC. The outreach team has a mobile van that brings essentials including meals and information about services available at the CRC. CVOEO also provides outreach services to residents of the Elmwood Shelter Community.

2. Describe the steps you take to ensure the project/program is accessible, inclusive, addressing racially equity, and culturally appropriate for the target population.

CVOEO's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Mission Statement and Code of Conduct sets the standard for treating all service-users and staff with respect and equality. CVOEO has a Director of Racial Equity who is a member of the CVOEO leadership team. The Racial Equity Director works with a 20-member Racial Equity Committee that oversees CVOEO's work in diversity, equity and inclusion. CVOEO's values for diversity, equity and inclusion are posted at the CRC and all staff have access to monthly diversity, equity and inclusion trainings hosted by the CVOEO. At least three trainings are required each year for all employees and diversity trainings are part of our orientation process.

VIII. Budget / Financial Feasibility

1. Budget Narrative: Provide a clear description of what you will do with CDBG's investment in the project/program. How will you spend the money? Give specific details.

CDBG funds will be used to build a two-story, 2,000 square foot addition on the front of the Feeding Chittenden facility and reconfigure the parking lot. The additional space on the first floor will allow the dining area, and CRC lounge to expand including the provision of private meeting space for staff to meet with clients as well as an additional public bathroom. The second floor will contain administrative offices and meeting space. Site improvements include a reconfiguration of the existing driveway and parking lot to provide safer pedestrian access and more green space along the front of the building where clients congregate. Conversations with the City and GMT about moving the curb cut and bus shelter have already begun. This will be a significant construction project that will require permitting, ground disturbance and management of urban soils all while keeping the programs operational. CDBG funds will be used for construction costs with soft costs including architectural and engineering design, permitting, environmental assessments, construction management and temporary relocation costs, being allocated to other sources.

2. If you plan to pay for staff with CDBG funding, describe what they do in relation to the specific service(s) / activity(ies) in your Project/Program Design.

a.

Specific Service / Activity	Position/Title	Work Related to CDBG-Funded Activity	# of Hours per Week spent on this Specific Service / Activity	% of Hours per Week spent on this Specific Service / Activity to be paid with CDBG
N/A				

b. All CDBG grantees that use CDBG funds for salaries must submit timesheets that capture total time and effort of staff members funded with CDBG. These timesheets must record hours worked on CDBG-funded programs, hours worked on non-CDBG funded programs and the corresponding program name/funding source(s). Timecards must include a narrative for all CDBG and non-CDBG funded activities, and must be signed by the employee and supervisor. Does your organization have the ability to implement a timekeeping system for CDBG funded staff that meets these requirements by July 1, 2024? Yes No Not funding salaries

3. Program/Project Budget

Line Item	CDBG Funds	Other	Total
Construction	\$ 200,000	\$1,524,879	\$1,724,879
Soft Costs	\$	\$ 263,121	\$ 263,121
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$1,988,000

4. Funding Sources for Feeding Chittenden/CHT	Program/Project		Agency	
	Current	Projected	Current	Projected

CDBG	\$ 300,000 (phase I reno proj)	\$200,000	\$	\$
State (specify)				
Employment & Training Programs			\$269,882	\$269,882
Housing & Homeless Programs			\$7,324,927	\$7,324,927
Nutrition Programs				
Utility Assistance & Energy Programs			\$2,153,925	\$2,153,925
Victim Services & Prevention			\$493,044	\$493,044
Head Start & Education Programs			\$275,976	\$275,976
Racial Equity & Community Inclusion			\$270,119	\$270,119
Federal (specify)				
Health & Human Services			\$8,398,085	\$8,398,085
USDA			\$177,547	\$177,547
Energy			\$2,153,433	\$2,153,433
HUD			\$810,022	\$810,022
Justice		\$500,000	\$554,794	\$554,794
Treasury			\$3,921,991	\$3,921,991
United Way			\$125,000	\$125,000
Private (specify)				
Donations			\$ 1,586,564	\$ 1,586,564
Foundations			\$ 873,500	\$ 873,500
Private Organizations			\$ 316,703	\$ 316,703
Fundraising		1,285,000	\$545,000	\$545,000
Fee for Service			\$570,877	\$570,877
Other (specify)				
City & Town Grants So. Burlington in-kind VCDP amin		3,000	\$125,333	\$125,333
Interest			\$110,000	\$110,000
In-Kind Food			\$800,000	\$800,000
In-Kind Volunteer			\$200,000	\$200,000
Total	\$ -	\$1,988,000	\$32,056,722	\$32,056,722

5. Of the total program/project cost, what percentage will be financed with CDBG?

$$\begin{array}{rclcl}
 \$ & \underline{200,000} & \div & \underline{\$1,988,000} & = & \underline{10\%} \\
 & \text{CDBG Funding} & & \text{Total Program/Project Costs} & & \text{Percentage}
 \end{array}$$

6. Of the total program/project cost, what would be the total cost per person?

$$\frac{\$1,988,000}{\text{Total Program/Project Cost}} \div \frac{700}{\# \text{ Total Proposed Beneficiaries}} = \$ \frac{2,840}{\text{Cost Per Person}}$$

$$\frac{\$200,000}{\text{Total Amount of CDBG Funding}} \div \frac{700}{\# \text{ Total Proposed CDBG Beneficiaries}} = \$ \frac{285}{\text{Cost Per Person CDBG Investment}}$$

7. Why should CDBG resources, as opposed to other sources of funding, be used for this project?

The majority of clients utilizing CRC services are Burlington residents as is a large percentage of people receiving groceries and meals through Feeding Chittenden. The services CVOEO provides at the CRC and at Feeding Chittenden, are entirely focused on alleviating the symptoms of poverty, helping people meet their basic needs, and helping people experiencing homelessness and housing instability develop a path toward safe, secure, affordable housing.

The proposed budget includes a significant fundraising campaign that will be undertaken by CVOEO with a formal campaign kick-off scheduled for February 14. To date they have commitments from the King Street Neighborhood Redevelopment Corp. and Jane’s Trust. Feeding Chittenden is a regional service provider and so the project is eligible for state CDBG funding (VCDP) but only equal to the total CDBG amount provided by the City. This request for \$200,000 in CDBG funds in addition to the \$300,000 provided for the renovation project will make the project eligible for \$500,000 in VCDP funds.

8. Describe your use of community resources, including volunteers. Include any resources not listed in your budget. Will CDBG be used to leverage other resources?

Feeding Chittenden has historically relied heavily on volunteers who help cook meals, pick-up donations and help in the grocery distribution service. Multiple supermarkets, restaurants, caterers and farms donate time, food and funds to support hunger relief efforts at Feeding Chittenden. Community support comes from EFNEP nutritionists, UVM medical students, Community Health Center clinicians and Safe Harbor Clinic social workers. Sister non-profits partner on initiatives and including COTS, Howard Center, Family Room, Sara Holbrook Center, King Street Youth Center, Vermont Youth Corps, Intervale, Vermont Foodbank, Hunger Free Vermont, ACORN, Healthy Roots Collaborative. Many corporations and civic groups donate time on food and fund drive events including IBM, Dealer.com, Seventh Generation, Rotary Clubs, and Moose Lodge to name a few. CVOEO advocates work closely with Congressional delegates and all media avenues to raise awareness and visibility of local and regional hunger and homelessness issues.

An allocation of Burlington CDBG funds is necessary to make the project eligible for VCDP funding (State CDBG). The CVOEO campaign will solicit philanthropic donors, foundations and corporate sponsors.

IX. Collaboration/Efficiency

- 1. Give 1 or 2 examples of key successful collaboration(s) between your program/project and another agency/program/group to address the needs of the people you serve.**

The existence of the Feeding Chittenden facility is due to the long-standing partnership between CVOEO and CHT. In 1994 the project brought the strengths of each organization to the table with CVOEO taking the lead with the programming and CHT taking the lead with the real estate development and both working together to raise the funds for the construction. In summer 2022, the organizations again partnered to assure that the only emergency shelter in Franklin County, Tim's House, will continue to operate. CHT took title to the property and is managing a renovation, while CVOEO is managing the ongoing operations. Most recently, CVOEO and CHT are partnering on the continuation of the Champlain Inn emergency shelter that had been operated by ANEW Place. When ANEW Place decided they were no longer able to operate this critical facility, CVOEO and CHT stepped in. CHT took title to the property and will manage the property including renovations while CVOEO manages the program.

- 2. Do identical or similar community programs exist? How does this program complement or collaborate rather than duplicate services? What makes this program unique?**

The Community Resource Center is the only low – barrier resource center in Burlington. It is unique in that visitors receive a wide variety of services from emergency and basic human needs to ongoing case management in a designated low-income area of need in the Old North End of Burlington. Nutrition services provided include breakfast and lunch, ongoing snacks and beverages, full-service grocery store with food and nonfood items as well as packaged to go foods created by a culinary job training program comprised of participants with lived experience. Clinicians visit FC/CRC to provide medical, dental, health care assessments, referrals and treatment. Advocates work with visitors to navigate housing opportunities and to provide warmth and respite on site during the day. For people living outside, the CRC is a place to come in out of the cold, be nourished and taken care of. The program works with sister non-profits on case management, mental health, corrections after care, substance abuse treatment and promotes racial justice and equity.

- 3. Provide 1 example of how your agency has become more efficient in achieving your outcomes or managing your project/program.**

The Community Resource Center works closely with another CVOEO program, Community Outreach Resource Advocates (CORA), that ensures people living in encampments or homeless with or without a roof to make sure services are provided throughout the community. The CORA outreach truck brings computer access, food, clothing, blankets and more to people. The advocates at CRC and Feeding Chittenden provide food and supplies to the CORA truck.

X. Sustainability

- 1. How will this project have a long-term benefit to the City of Burlington? If this program/project ends, how will that benefit continue?**

The Feeding Chittenden facility has been serving food insecure people with meals and groceries for decades. Investing CDBG funds in this building to make all of the services and required staffing fit more comfortably and efficiently will surely benefit the City for years to come. The conservatively projected beneficiaries of this project only reflect one year of Burlington residents served – that number can be multiplied over multiple years to get the true benefit to the City.

2. CDBG funding is intended for new or expanded services. If CDBG funding ends, will the project be able to continue?

CDBG funds will be used to create a permanent asset in an expanded renovated space at Feeding Chittenden. The operations will not need ongoing CDBG support.

3. How will you prioritize the proposed project activities if you do not receive the full amount requested?

We will seek additional sources by increasing the goal of the community fundraising campaign.