

**City of Burlington Housing Trust Fund (HTF)  
Capacity Grant Application**

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION
Committee On Temporary Shelter (COTS)
CONTACT NAME
Tamira Martel, Corporate and Foundations Relationship Manager
DAYTIME PHONE & E-MAIL
(802) 540-3084 ext. 208 : tamiram@cotsonline.org
NAME OF PROJECT
COTS Waystation
AMOUNT REQUESTED
\$7,500
ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION START DATE (FOR FEASIBILITY/PREDEVELOPMENT GRANTS)
N/A
ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE
Ongoing program
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST
\$322,436

Is the applicant a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation organized and operated for the purpose of creating or preserving housing for very low, low and moderate income households?

- Yes  
 No

Would the requested grant support the staffing, training, planning, fundraising or on-going operations of a nonprofit corporation, thereby increasing that corporation's capacity to create or preserve housing for very low, low and moderate income households?

- Yes  
 No

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

**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 provide the information below in the space provided. It is important to complete all fields. If you need additional space, attach separate pages to your application and title them as indicated below.

**Project description** (Please briefly describe your project. Specifically describe how Housing Trust Funds would: a) support your organization's ongoing operation and/or b) support the assessment of structural and financial feasibility of new affordable housing.):

Please see attachment A.: COTS Project Narrative-COTS Waystation

**Please describe how the organization is currently involved in the construction of new affordable housing:**

Please see attachment A.: COTS Project Narrative-COTS Waystation

**Please describe how the application supports one or more of the priorities listed in the City's Housing Action Plan:**

Please see attachment A.: COTS Project Narrative-COTS Waystation

**Please describe how the application supports one or more of the priorities listed in the City's Consolidated Plan:**

Please see attachment A.: COTS Project Narrative-COTS Waystation

**Please describe the financial need of the requested activity (include a project budget with all sources and uses):**

Please see attachment A.: COTS Project Narrative-COTS Waystation

**Please describe the negative impact to the community if the request is not funded:**

Please see attachment A.: COTS Project Narrative-COTS Waystation

**Please describe how the proposed project supports an underserved and vulnerable population:**

Please see attachment A.: COTS Project Narrative-COTS Waystation

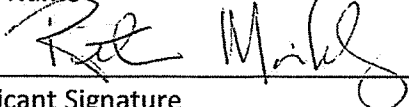
Signature Page

Please check each box that applies:

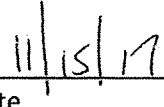
- Good Standing:** I certify that I am in "good standing" with respect to, or in full compliance with a plan to pay any and all taxes due to the City of Burlington.
- Certification:** Under penalties of perjury, I declare that the information I have provided, to the best of my knowledge and belief, is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

Rita Markley, Executive Director

Print Name



Applicant Signature



Date

**Project Narrative - COTS Waystation  
BURLINGTON HOUSING TRUST FUND FY18  
Capacity Grant Application**

*Submitted by the Committee on Temporary Shelter  
November 15, 2017*

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**Project description:**

The Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) provides emergency shelter, homelessness prevention assistance, support services, and housing for those who are homeless or marginally housed in Vermont. COTS began in 1982 when a group of concerned community members joined to address the needs of the growing homeless population in Burlington. Today, COTS serves approximately 2,400 people annually through a variety of programs. Nearly half of all COTS clients are residents of Burlington.

This application seeks funding for the Waystation, a 36-bed emergency shelter that meets the most basic needs of adult homeless men and women in our community. The Waystation serves as a refuge from the streets and helps people stabilize their lives in times of crisis. It is the entry point for a variety of services offered through COTS, including assistance from COTS Housing Resource Center's Housing Navigator Team, access to COTS' housing (permanent or transitional) and connections to other community resources and housing through partners such as Champlain Housing Trust, Safe Harbor, Howard Center, and others.

Funding will be used to pay for the day-to-day expenses of operating the shelter and providing services to help stabilize approximately 220 homeless adults. Our goal is to help Waystation clients move toward independence and permanent housing.

**Please describe how the organization is currently involved in the construction of new affordable housing:**

This spring, thanks to our community's incredible collaboration and support, as well as key partners and funders such as Housing Vermont, VHCB, and BTF to name a few, COTS opened our newly renovated program and housing facility at 95 North Avenue in April, bringing together emergency services, prevention outreach, services, and 14 new units of affordable housing – all in one location.

**Please describe how the application supports one or more of the priorities listed in the City's Housing Action Plan:**

Under the fourth priority listed in the City's Housing Action Plan (CHAP), "New Approaches to Homelessness in Our Community" item 2. outlines the benefits of emergency shelter, particularly as a gateway for accessing programs and services. COTS Waystation program is that point of connection for individuals experiencing homelessness in the greater Burlington area. As the largest service provider for the homeless and those at risk of homelessness in Vermont the breadth and depth of our services and connections to community providers is unmatched in this area.

Drawing on established research in this field, as well as 35 years of experience working with homeless populations, COTS knows that emergency shelter is not the solution to homelessness. It is absolutely critical to provide shelter, one of our most elemental human needs, to those without housing, but this itself is not enough to end homelessness. People become homeless because of many complex factors,

including poverty, mental illness, substance abuse, soaring health care costs, and domestic violence. Shelter alone, without supportive services, does not address these factors.

Staff members work with residents to find employment, health care, and affordable housing so they can become independent. We help individuals obtain entitlement benefits and link them to local resources that help them increase skill levels and income and overcome personal barriers hampering their ability to secure and maintain housing, such as poor credit and/or rental histories or substance abuse or mental health issues.

This is why COTS has designed the Waystation so that guests have their need for shelter met while also receiving supportive services that help them achieve self-sufficiency and stable, permanent housing.

**Please describe how the application supports one or more of the priorities listed in the City's Consolidated Plan:**

COTS Waystation helps the City of Burlington positively advance in some capacity, several of the strategies and objectives listed in the City's Consolidated Plan.

Under the CDBG purpose: Decent Housing one of the key strategies is to protect the vulnerable. The emergency shelter provided 365 days a year to homeless individuals by COTS Waystation helps address this need. The housing assistance provided by COTS' housing navigators to our Waystation guests directly addresses bullet number one under the CDBG purpose: Decent Housing.

- Assisting homeless persons obtain affordable housing;

COTS' primary goal for residents staying at the Waystation is to have them successfully exit the program with sustainable, permanent housing and possess the skills needed to maintain residential stability for the long-term to avoid repeated episodes of homelessness.

COTS' housing navigators are experts in housing. Their knowledge and expertise in this arena coupled with their ability to leverage community resources, such as COTS Housing Resource Center to their client's benefit is unparalleled in our area. Housing navigators work intensively with their clients to locate, secure, and maintain sustainable, permanent housing. Having staff members who can provide housing support and services in one location saves our clients time and makes it easier for them to get the help and services they need. When people are experiencing homelessness, having fewer meetings in multiple locations helps conserve resources like bus passes or gas. It also frees up more time to find a job, work more hours at a job they already have, or participate in skills training and educational programs.

Although the vacancy rate in Chittenden County has more than doubled from less than 1 percent two years ago to slightly more than 2 percent in June of this year, it is still one of the lowest rates in the nation. The acute shortage of affordable rental units in the greater Burlington area means that people transitioning from homelessness often cannot gain a foothold in our local housing market even if they possess a housing voucher or have accumulated sufficient financial resources to pay rent. Many clients have little or no positive rental histories and poor credit ratings further limiting their options in a challenging rental landscape.

To provide additional resources to help homeless individuals overcome these barriers, COTS added a new position in 2016, housing outreach specialist, within our Housing Resource Center (HRC). Since the

inception of the HRC more than nine years ago COTS has worked to develop partnerships with a variety of area landlords to provide housing opportunities to our clients. The addition of the housing outreach specialist position is the natural next step in providing more robust rapid rehousing services to individuals in need.

COTS has a strong track record of successfully placing our clients with area landlords who understand their challenges and are willing to work with them to achieve a mutually beneficial relationship. This position helps forge and maintain dynamic relationships with area landlords decreasing the number of households experiencing homelessness as well as the amount of time people are homeless. Our housing outreach specialist's focus on ongoing outreach and educational activities with an emphasis on expanding community connections will also help prevent people from becoming homeless.

**Please describe the financial need of the requested activity (include a project budget with all sources and uses):**

COTS Waystation program costs more than \$322,436 annually. COTS Waystation is the largest emergency shelter for single adults in our area and serves as the centralized entry point to access shelter and services for a majority of men and women experiencing homelessness in Chittenden County.

The \$7,500 requested in a capacity grant from the Burlington Housing Trust Fund would be used for staffing, operations, and client programs.

See Attachment B. – COTS FY17 Waystation Budget\*

\*Please note that COTS fiscal year runs from October 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>. Our FY18 budget will not be formally approved and adopted by our board of directors until late November of 2017.

**Please describe the negative impact to the community if the request is not funded:**

Homelessness continues to be a critical issue in our community. Homeless individuals face enormous safety and health issues. Without a secure place to be at night, they run the risk of being mugged, beaten, or raped. They face other health issues as well, such as frostbite, circulation issues, diabetes, skin infections, and upper respiratory infections.

This is why COTS Waystation offers such a vital service to homeless adults in our community. The Waystation is a 36-bed overnight, emergency shelter that meets the most basic needs of adult homeless men and women in our community. The shelter has the capacity to serve 36 adults, with 28 beds in the men's facility and 8 beds in the women's facility. The Waystation is open 365 days a year, from 6:15 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. The facility offers guests a spot to store their few belongings, and access to a washer, dryer, and clean showers.

Although our shelters at COTS are dry, meaning guests must be sober; the Waystation offers white flag nights (when the temperature is below freezing or otherwise inhospitable), when we permit guests under the influence to stay at the shelter. COTS Waystation staff work in tandem with the local Warming Shelter to ensure that no individual remains without shelter during inclement weather. We also open one hour earlier so guests can come in from the cold. During the winter of 2016/2017 the Waystation experienced 159 overflow bed nights due to extreme weather.

Homelessness stems from a combination of factors, including a shortage of affordable housing, severe poverty, domestic violence, and a lack of social supports. A powerful driver of homelessness in the

Burlington area is the shortage of affordable rental housing. In the Burlington-South Burlington Metropolitan Statistical Area, the 2017 Fair Market Rent for an efficiency apartment is \$923 per month. To afford that, and not pay more than the recommended 30% on housing, a renter must earn \$17+ per hour.

In addition to high rental costs, the Burlington area also has one of the nation's lowest-vacancy rates. According to a housing market analysis provided by Hickok & Boardman Realty, there was a 2.5% vacancy rate in the greater Burlington area as of June of 2017.

COTS continually seeks potential funders for our programs and services and has a diversified funding base, which includes individual donors, corporations, foundations, special events, government grants, bequests, and more. We work tirelessly to engage the public, increase our donor pool, and spread the word about the positive outcomes of our programs.

However, if COTS is unable to raise the full program budget, it could result in a reduction of services within this program or in other areas of our organization. A decrease in services could result in fewer individuals served overall and potentially increased shelter stays or use of overflow motels. We would aim to sustain the program through additional private contributions, foundation grants, and government grants, but in a more competitive fundraising climate, it may be impossible to provide the same level of service with reduced funds and it is likely that some services could be interrupted while trying to secure new funding.

**Please describe how the proposed project supports an underserved and vulnerable population:**

The Waystation serves some of the most vulnerable members of our community, homeless men and women with few if any social or familial supports to access in times of crises. Many are struggling with ongoing issues that make finding and maintaining permanent housing a significant challenge. The Waystation offers a safe, caring environment and is the only alternative to the streets for many homeless adults. This program is also a gateway to a continuum of services offered through COTS, such as transitional housing or permanent single occupancy units. The Waystation provides a sober place to sleep each night and a starting point to regain independence and is a vital resource in our community for those homeless individuals in recovery trying hard to maintain their sobriety.

Some Waystation guests suffer from a chronic health conditions (40%); a physical disability (34%); a developmental disability (17%); struggled with substance abuse prior to being admitted to the Waystation; (22%) or a mental illness (56%) or are recently released from prison(12%). We work to connect these individuals with organizations within our community to provide the appropriate services and supports they need to regain and maintain their independence.

As mentioned above many individuals experiencing homelessness struggle with chronic and/or debilitating medical issues. Prior to admission all Waystation guests are referred to the Safe Harbor Clinic to get a tuberculosis screening. Not only does it help to ensure the health of all guests at the Waystation, but it also means that guests will see a health practitioner who may notice additional health issues. Many homeless people do not have regular medical check-ups so this is one way to connect them with medical care. In addition, COTS has a long-time partnership with the University of Vermont's College of Medicine to provide additional health and wellness screenings and guidance.

More than 9% of the visitors to the Waystation are veterans and 32% of our guests have experienced domestic violence. Last fiscal year, the Waystation provided services to 213 unduplicated individuals, an

average of 35 people each night ranging from 18 years old to 78. One individual did not give a place of former residence. Of those who did list a former residence, 53% of them came from communities in Chittenden (47%), Franklin (4%), and Grand Isle (2%) counties, 8% of them previously resided in another Vermont county and the remainder came from out of state. The two most common reasons Waystation guests became homeless: 1) asked to leave a shared residence/family situation changed and 2) loss of job or reduction in income. Chronically homeless individuals comprised 27% of Waystation guests.

The following demographics represent guests utilizing the Waystation:

AGE: 11% aged 18-25; 30% aged 26-39; 24% aged 40-49; 22% aged 50-59; 13% aged 60+;

ETHNICITY: .4% Central American; 5% Latin-Other; .4% Cuban; .4% Mexican; 90% Not Latin; 1% Puerto Rican; .4% South American; 2% unknown or client refused;

RACE: 4% American Indian or Alaskan Native; 1% Asian; 14% Black or African American; 77% Caucasian; .4% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; 7% unknown or client refused;

GENDER: 33% females; 66% males, 1% identified as transgender female;

HOUSEHOLD INCOME: 96% had a household income below 30% Average Median Income (AMI) as determined by HUD; 2.5% had income between 30% and 50% AMI as determined by HUD; .5% had income greater than 50% AMI as determined by HUD.

**Progress report for previous year's funding:**

The Burlington Housing Trust Fund (BHTF) provided \$7,500 to support COTS Waystation in the fall of 2017. During COTS most recently completed fiscal year (10/1/2016 to 09/30/2017), COTS Housing Resource Center achieved the following outputs and outcomes:

- 213 unduplicated individuals received emergency overnight shelter;
- Shelter guests ranged from 18 to 78 years of age (74% Male, 24% Female, 2% Transgender);
- 213 unduplicated individuals received referral for support services through COTS case management and other community services;
- 213 unduplicated individuals received referrals for TB tests and general health screening;
- On average, the Waystation had 35 guests per night compared with an average of 34 the previous year;
- Waystation guests stayed an average of 52 nights per stay (average individual spent 62 nights over the time period across all stays compared to 72 the previous year);
- 112 calendar nights when the shelter was over capacity compared to 119 the previous year;
- 159 overflow bed nights compared to 172 the previous year.

The following stories illustrate how COTS Housing Resource Center breaks the fall for people in need and helps them get back on their feet:

In late April of this year "Tom" is moved into one of the apartments located at COTS 95 North Avenue facility. "Tom" visited today for a walk-thru of his apartment. "Tom" is a soft spoken man in his late 40's

with a grin that is infectious. "Tom" had been a guest at the Waystation, for almost a year. During that time, he became an indispensable unofficial member of the team at the Waystation. He was always willing to roll up his sleeves and pitch in whether there were cleaning chores, meals to be prepared or whatever needed to be done. "Tom" was more than willing to lend a hand and be part of the larger community that we cultivate at the Waystation.

Before becoming homeless, "Tom's" last stable housing situation was as a live-in caretaker for his aging mother. He handled most aspects of managing her day-to-day needs, such as cleaning, cooking, running errands, and as her illness progressed, helping her with her personal care and medical needs. His compassion and commitment for his mother came at a price. "Tom" was not able to commit to full-time employment during the many years that his mother needed intensive care, and consequently, he essentially dropped out of the work force. Sadly "Tom's" mother passed away from complications due to her illness. For a time, he was able to keep up with the bills and remain in his mother's home with income from part-time employment, but eventually without sufficient income from a 40-hour position, he fell behind and couldn't catch up. Within a year of his mother's passing "Tom" was homeless, relying on help from friends and family for shelter and assistance.

During this time, "Tom" began to experience a host of medical issues, some requiring multiple surgeries over a period of time further hampering his ability to secure full-time employment. That is when "Tom" became a guest at COPTS Waystation facility. After several months of convalescing, "Tom" was cleared by his physician to return to work. Within a short period of time, with help from COTS staff he was able to finally find full-time employment. "Tom's" employer states that his performance of his duties at work is "exemplary" and that, "He shows great initiative, attention to detail, and a sincere approach to his job." "Tom" has diligently saved as much money as he possibly could from his new job while staying at COTS Waystation so he would be ready once he was able to find permanent housing that met his budget and needs. "Tom" has realized that goal and is now setting new goals for the future.



1:06 PM  
11/15/17  
Accrual Basis

Committee On Temporary Shelter  
Profit & Loss Budget Performance  
October 2016 through September 2017

	COTS Waystation FY17	Annual Budget
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>		
<b>Income</b>		
<b>United Way</b>		
Chittenden County UWay		39,843
<b>Total United Way</b>		39,843
<b>General Public Support</b>		245,635
General Contributions		245,635
<b>Federal Grants</b>		
FEMA		10,000
<b>Total Federal Grants</b>		10,000
<b>State Grants</b>		
HOP		0
<b>Total State Grants</b>		0
<b>Municipalities</b>		
BHTF		7,500
<b>Total Municipalities</b>		7,500
<b>Other</b>		
Veterans Per Diem Fees		19,458
<b>Total Other</b>		19,458
<b>Total Income</b>		322,436
<b>Gross Profit</b>		322,436
<b>Expense</b>		
<b>Personnel</b>		
Salaries & Wages		214,482
FICA		16,043
SUI		0
Life & Disability Insurance		1,577
Health Insurance		12,568
Dental Insurance		1,479
Workers Compensation		2,593
403B Employer Contribution		1,932
Emp Plan Mgmt		592
Personnel EAP & COSTCO		547
<b>Total Personnel</b>		251,813
<b>Operations</b>		
Total Operating Leases Canal & 95N		1,870
Furnishings		180
Infestation Avoidance		192
Repairs and Maintenance		10,236
Capital Obligation		4,200
Maintenance & Cleaning Supplies		6,120
Property Management Fee		3,396
Americorp		121
Rent		1,305

Committee On Temporary Shelter  
Profit & Loss Budget Performance  
October 2016 through September 2017

COTS Waystation FY17	<u>Annual Budget</u>
Life Safety & Security	88
Insurance	6,901
Property Tax Contribution	230
Total Utilities	15,136
Telephone	1,255
Contract Janitorial	9,051
Contract Labor	
Technology Supplies and Equipme	1,362
IT & Network Support	1,555
Office Supplies & Services	446
Printing and Reproduction	0
Postage	40
Dues, Subscriptions, Permits	34
Hiring & HR	966
Kudos	0
Travel	232
Interest Expense	0
Training and Development	0
Legal & Professional Fees	0
Accounting, Audit & Invsmt Fees	3,066
Miscellaneous Expense	230
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>68,212</b>
<b>Client</b>	
Meals	50
Telephone & Utilities	410
Translation Service	120
Transportation	510
Supplies & Activities	1,321
<b>Total Client</b>	<b>2,411</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>322,436</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>0</b>

## Todd Rawlings

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**From:** Todd Rawlings  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2017 4:15 PM  
**To:** 'Tamira Martel'  
**Subject:** RE: Burlington Housing Trust Fund FY18 Capacity Grant Applications from COTS

Good afternoon Tamira,

This is your confirmation that I have received your proposals prior to the Housing Trust Fund ("HTF") Request for Proposals deadline. The HTF Administrative Committee (HTFAC) will be examining all proposals and we hope to have final decisions about the awards by the middle of December. I will notify you as soon as possible regarding the HTFAC's decisions regarding awards. In the meantime, I may contact you if there are questions about your proposals.

Very Best,

Todd Rawlings  
CEDO Housing Program Manager  
652-4209

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**From:** Tamira Martel [<mailto:tamiram@cotsonline.org>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 15, 2017 3:32 PM  
**To:** Todd Rawlings  
**Subject:** Burlington Housing Trust Fund FY18 Capacity Grant Applications from COTS

Good afternoon Todd,

The Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) is deeply grateful for the past support we have received from the Burlington Housing Trust Fund and the residents of the City of Burlington. We appreciate the opportunity to submit the attached proposals for COTS' Waystation and Housing Resource Center. If you have any questions or need additional materials please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

All the best,

Tamira

Tamira Martel  
Corporate and Foundations Relationship Manager  
Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS)  
(802) 540-3084 ext. 208  
[tamiram@cotsonline.org](mailto:tamiram@cotsonline.org)



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