

Housing Trust Fund
Capacity Grant Application

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION Cathedral Square
CONTACT NAME Julian Mandigo
DAYTIME PHONE & E-MAIL P. (802) 859-8815 C. (802) 373-8408 E. julianmandigo@cathedralsquare.org
NAME OF PROJECT Cathedral Square Capacity Grant
AMOUNT REQUESTED \$40,000
ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION START DATE (FOR FEASIBILITY/PREDEVELOPMENT GRANTS) N/A
ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE 6/30/2024
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST \$40,000

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.):

The following request for \$40,000 in funding from the Burlington Housing Trust Fund will support the mission and the evolving operations of Cathedral Square (CS) to advance service-enriched housing for low-income older adults and people with disabilities in the Burlington area. Specifically, this request will fund:

- Housing Retention services: to support residents at risk of losing their housing and thereby prevent homelessness.
- Docusign: Continue to streamline the work processes for our Occupancy and Compliance Management Division and begin to train staff in the Finance and Human Resources departments, to use Docusign and implement processes for a phased-in launch. The expanded use of Docusign will not only making the process for housing subsidy recertification much easier and more efficient for both staff and residents but should improve our response time with newly hired staff and expedite the signing of financial documents for grants.
- KnowledgeWave: Continue investment in incorporating KnowledgeWave into our training curriculum.
- Anti-Racism work: through the programs “We All Belong” and “EmPowerR”, to provide continued training for staff as well as new educational opportunities for residents.

Housing Retention: CS remains committed to supporting and coaching residents at risk of losing their housing due to mental health challenges, hoarding, financial instability and other challenges. As we have seen locally, state-wide, and nationally, the risk for homelessness is increasing at an extraordinary rate, and services are strained. The best prevention is keeping people housed in affordable housing. CS’s Successful Housing – Identifying Needs with Enhanced Services (SHINES) program is in its 3rd year, and each year CS is able to invest more time and energy into housing retention.

The SHINES Coach works one-on-one with residents struggling with mental health challenges, housing and code issues resulting in failed inspections, financial challenges, substance use disorder, and community challenges. We demonstrate that this position and service helps to prevent evictions, improves people’s quality of life and supports staff in this challenging situation. SHINES provide individualized coaching, education, direct service, coordinator and resource recruitment.

The SHINES Coach also connects participants in larger community work with other housing providers and service organizations to find the best fit for more housing retention options in our community. Community partners include the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance, Housing Retention Sub-Committee and Hoarding Resource Support Team.

Additions to the Housing Retention program this year:

- The CS SHINES Coach has almost 30 years of experience in resident services and housing retention with a background in community mental health and counseling. Beginning in 2024, the SHINES Coach will be full-time and solely focused on Housing Retention.
- CS has evaluated the process of risks our residents face in remaining housed and is offering SHINES opportunities and information at more points along this process. An example of this is having SHINES reach out with information as residents receive their 3rd lease violation in areas of concern. To target potential issues farther upstream, we can plan for additional final communications prior to any legal lease termination.
- The SHINES program is also looking for capacity to expand the resident education component – teaching people how to proactively remain successfully housed before they are at risk. SHINES

hope to work with proposed CS incentive programs to continue to foster successful prevention strategies.

Housing Retention is an essential service for successful housing provision in this extremely tight housing market in which we see increasing homelessness. CS has committed funds through operations and seeks BHTF support for this position.

DocuSign: With the help of BHTF in 2023, Cathedral Square invested in an e-signature program called DocuSign. This system has allowed us to better serve our residents as well as greatly enhance efficiencies for internal processes. Having a streamlined and electronic process for grant agreements, hiring contracts, background check documents, etc. has saved staff time and energy to focus on other areas. We would like to continue to streamline the work processes for our Occupancy and Compliance Management Division as well as begin to train staff in the Finance and Human Resources departments, to use DocuSign and implement processes for a phased-in launch. The expanded use of DocuSign will not only making the process for housing subsidy recertification much easier and more efficient for both staff and residents but should improve our response time with newly hired staff and expedite the signing of financial documents for grants.

KnowledgeWave: CS will continue incorporating KnowledgeWave into our training curriculum. We have found that KnowledgeWave is an extremely valuable tool alongside our in-house information technology training sessions for staff. Our IT staff is working on a plan to utilize the KnowledgeWave training videos- both live training and recorded trainings as part of the on-boarding process for new staff as well as continuing education to increase staff confidence with the tools available to them. With the transition to Microsoft 365 complete, having a comprehensive, easily accessible and continually up to date training modules system available to all staff is invaluable for staff retention and efficiency of work.

Anti-Racism Training: The CS JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) committee plans to continue to build our in-house learning on JEDI issues and offer engagement opportunities to our staff as well as add in training and educational opportunities for our residents this year. Two ways we have identified to do this work are through the We All Belong program series and through our EmpowR Consultant.

We All Belong: We would like a sub-set of CS employees from the leadership team and the JEDI committee to participate in the We All Belong series developed and led by a local consulting firm, CQ Strategies. The We All Belong program is a community-based Diversity, Equity and Inclusion professional development opportunity. It pulls multiple organizations together to learn in collaboration about implicit bias, equity literacy, cultural competency and to develop and implement strategies to create inclusive and welcoming work and learning environments. It includes 3 full-day in person sessions over the course of 12-weeks. We think having local organizations work and learn together on this helps build community and reinforce the learning and engagement to broaden and sustain the impact.

EmpowR: We will continue to work with EmpowR Consultant to co-create (with CS staff) and facilitate three equity circle sessions (2 hours each) for Cathedral Square residents to cultivate deeper empathy, emotional agility, communal care, and respect for human dignity. Each circle will include cultural somatics and circle dialogue practices, equity educational components, and will be facilitated in a way that supports comprehension of experience and content in a way that meets people at their entry points. This is a continuation of the work we started under the previous grant.

In addition to supporting CS's ongoing operations, the Burlington Housing Trust Fund grant award will support CS's capacity to assess new housing opportunities. CS's proposed activities for this grant award

will improve the ways we deliver resident services, improve efficiency of operations, evolve our culture to be antiracist, and enhance our connection to the larger community.

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

Kelley's Field II, Hinesburg

CS is partnering with Evernorth to develop 24 new housing units for older adults at our Kelley's Field property in Hinesburg. Construction is underway and we anticipate occupation beginning in August 2024.

Reid Commons, St. Albans

CS is developing 33 new housing units for older adults in St. Albans. Construction is anticipated to begin in June 2024.

Whitcomb Woods, Essex Junction

CS is planning the modernization of Whitcomb Woods, a 65-unit 42-year-old affordable housing community for older adults in Essex Junction.

CS continues to build its housing pipeline by exploring other development opportunities and partnership possibilities in the Burlington area and beyond.

Please describe how the application supports one or more of the priorities listed in the City's Housing [Action Plan](#):

AP-65 Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities – 91.220(i)

- *Reducing and ending homelessness - Helping homeless persons (especially chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living, including shortening the period of time that individuals and families experience homelessness, facilitating access for homeless individuals and families to affordable housing units, and preventing individuals and families who were recently homeless from becoming homeless again.*
- *Helping low-income individuals and families avoid becoming homeless, especially extremely low-income individuals and families and those who are: being discharged from publicly funded institutions and systems of care (such as health care facilities, mental health facilities, foster care and other youth facilities, and corrections programs and institutions); or, receiving assistance from public or private agencies that address housing, health, social services, employment, education, or youth needs.*

Cathedral Square's housing retention program helps to prevent homelessness by providing needed support to residents who are at risk of losing their housing (and thereby losing their subsidy). Additionally, those who have previously been unhoused often face more challenges that impact their ability to remain housed. Our Housing Retention program helps to prevent individuals and families who were recently homeless from becoming homeless again.

AP-85 Other Actions – 91.220(k)

- *Actions planned to foster and maintain affordable housing*

The BHTF award will strengthen CS's capacity by supporting housing retention services, improve our internal systems and resident services, and provide us training resources to help our organization evolve to become anti-racist. This capacity building is essential to help CS continue serving our current and future residents effectively. This also positions CS to more effectively create new, service-enriched housing

opportunities for the growing population of low- and moderate-income older adults and people with disabilities, at the same or better level of quality and construction and service delivery.

Please describe how the application supports one or more of the priorities listed in the City's [Consolidated Plan](#):

SP-25 Priority Needs:

- 1. Maintain or Preserve Affordable Housing - To maintain affordable housing units through rehabilitation or preserve units from being lost in the affordable housing inventory.
- 2. Increase Affordable Housing Opportunities - To work with for profit and not for profit developers to increase the construction of rental and owner occupied affordable housing.

The BHTF award will strengthen CS’s capacity and this positions CS to more effectively maintain as well as create new, service-enriched housing opportunities for the growing population of low- and moderate-income older adults and people with disabilities, at the same or better level of quality and construction and service delivery.

- 9. Provide Public Services to At Risk Population - To provide access to services for housing retention, hunger relief, at-risk youth

The BHTF award will bolster CS’s housing-retention services, allowing us to provide more and better support to at-risk households. Lacking these services, at-risk residents can lose their housing, which sometimes means losing subsidy, which in turn makes it impossible to compete in the high-cost Burlington housing market.

- 10. Protect the Vulnerable - To provide services for homeless residents, survivors of domestic violence, frail elderly, those in permanent supportive housing.

Housing Retention - CS provides services to the most vulnerable: older adults, frail and low-income elderly residents, and those at risk of losing their housing, through housing retention services.

- 12. Planning and Administration - To support the capacity of the nonprofit institutional delivery structure in the City; pursue state and federal resources in support of City initiatives; implement City planning efforts; administer community and economic development programs; and support fair housing efforts in the City.

This project seeks support for the capacity of Cathedral Square in carrying out the City’s goals to serve the most vulnerable and older adults with affordable housing and services

- Antiracism – in July 2020, the City and 30-plus Chittenden County Organizations (including CS) together declared racism a public health emergency and outlined needed actions to eliminate race-based health disparities and systemic racism in Chittenden County.

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

\$22,380	Housing Retention Services
\$4,000	Docusign
\$1,620	KnowledgeWave
\$10,000	We All Belong
\$2,000	EmPowerR
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\$40,000	Total Request

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

Housing Retention Services: this is a critical program we offer to our residents to help avert crises and keep residents safely housed, thus preventing homelessness.

Antiracism Training: without such training, we will not be able to make the structural changes needed to address systemic racism both within our organization and the broader affordable-housing community.

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

The target population we serve is comprised of low-income older adults and people with disabilities, including people of color and those of non-American ancestry. 19.7% of CS residents were previously unhoused. Both of these initiatives, housing retention and antiracism work, support this underserved population.

- Housing retention work will help keep lower income older adults safely housed and prevent homelessness.

Antiracism work will enable us to elevate the voices of people of color and ensure that all of our policies, procedures and interactions are more than “inclusive” and “non-discriminatory” – they will be explicitly anti-racist.

Signature

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.

Julian Mandigo
Print Name

Julian Mandigo
Applicant Signature

11/15/2023
Date