

**Housing Trust Fund
Capacity Grant Application**

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION Burlington Dismas House
CONTACT NAME Kim Parsons
DAYTIME PHONE & E-MAIL 802-658-0381
NAME OF PROJECT Burlington Dismas House
AMOUNT REQUESTED \$18,000
ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION START DATE (FOR FEASIBILITY/PREDEVELOPMENT GRANTS)
ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE The programs of Burlington Dismas House are ongoing.
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST \$655,469

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.):

Burlington Dismas House welcomes between 10 and 25 former prisoners annually into the Buell Street Dismas House in Burlington. The house has a communal kitchen, a large dining room, a living room with a house television and computer, laundry room, and shared bedrooms. House residents and staff share weekday meals with volunteer cooks from the community, participate in weekly house meetings, practice consensus decision-making and a restorative approach to problem solving, and take part in volunteer and social activities together.

New residents typically move to Dismas directly from prison and begin paying the weekly \$85 program fee ten days after they arrive. The program fee includes food, utilities, laundry and housing. Program staff meet with residents weekly to identify and discuss goals, wellness, and stress management techniques and to ensure that residents have access to the services they need to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Staff help residents find job opportunities if they need assistance and work with them to create individualized plans for moving into and maintaining permanent and sustainable housing. Dismas has recently implemented a program that pays the security deposit for residents who have completed the Dismas program and are moving into their own apartments.

Burlington Dismas House provides very affordable, supportive transitional housing to low income former prisoners. We received funding from grants from the Vermont Department of Corrections, philanthropic foundations, businesses, and individuals. In-kind donations of food and time help keep our costs low. However, each year our expenses increase, due cost of living increases in various aspects of our program, including utilities, food, and staffing. We have increased our fundraising and grant writing activities in response to these increases. During a challenging fiscal year marked by inflation, funding from the Housing Trust Funds would help us maintain affordable housing for a low income, vulnerable population and would cover a portion of our expense budget.

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

We are not currently involved in the construction of new affordable housing.

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

This application supports goal DH 3.1 in the City's 2023 Housing Action Plan. Burlington Dismas House provides transitional housing to prisoners in Vermont who have served their minimum sentence but who do not have safe or Department of Corrections approved housing in the community. Supporting the programs of Burlington Dismas House will allow BDH to remain open and available to extremely low income Vermonters. Without Dismas House, more people would either remain incarcerated at a high cost to tax payers, or eventually be released into the community without support or affordable housing, which frequently results in return to prison or homelessness. Burlington Dismas House bridges the gap between prison and permanent housing in the community; former prisoners are provided very affordable shelter and support while they seek employment and independent housing.

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

The consolidated plan describes a "housing tenure ladder" that includes both security and mobility – people should be able to obtain affordable housing, and should also be able to move easily from one rung of the housing ladder to another. Transitional housing, such as that provided by Dismas House, is an important

rung on that ladder. When individuals leave prison and arrive at Dismas house, they have safe, well maintained, and affordable housing. The high level of structured support provided by Dismas House provides individuals with the opportunity to move to the next rung of the ladder – a more permanent housing situation in the community. Dismas facilitates this step by providing a small grant that helps residents transitioning out of Dismas pay the security deposit on their own apartments. Maintaining Dismas aligns with the consolidated plan high priority “AFH - Maintain or Preserve Affordable Housing” for very low income residents, as well as the high priority “Protect the vulnerable”.

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

In order to cover our expenses this year, we anticipate raising almost \$100,000 in grant funding for the programs of Burlington Dismas House. This is approximately \$40,000 more than we raise in a typical year. We have had large increases in several areas of our budget: utilities, food, maintenance, purchased services, and supplies. Furthermore, budgeted staffing costs this year include the anticipated cost of training new house directors, as both Burlington Dismas House directors, with 69 years of experience between them, will be retiring in 2024. Included in this application are the total Burlington Dismas House budget, which includes both the Buell Street Dismas House in Burlington and East Allen Dismas House in Winooski, as well as the budget for only the Buell Street Program. The fundraising income covers expenses at both Buell Street and East Allen. We are requesting funds for program expenses at the Buell Street Dismas House in Burlington.

	FY 24	FY 24
<i>Fundraising</i>	Buell Street Income	Total Burlington Dismas House Income
Unsolicited Donations	17,500.84	17,500.84
Dinner and Auction	50,500.00	50,500.00
Campaigns	64,000.00	64,000.00
Grants	98,352.00	98,352.00
<i>Earned Income</i>		
State of Vermont	123,529.00	288,235.00
Program Fees	26,500	53,000.00
<i>Interest Income</i>	47,826.00	47,826.00
Total Income	\$428,207.84	\$619,413.84
	FY 24	FY 24
	Buell Street Expenses	Total Burlington Dismas House Expenses
<i>Payroll Expenses</i>		
Salaries	165,822.08	326,774.22
Other Payroll	11,653.90	22,776.04
Employee Benefits	29,955.72	59,811.04
<i>Facilities/Utilities</i>	17,550.00	68,850.00
<i>Program Expenses</i>		
Groceries	10,000.00	20,000.00
Auto	1,025.00	2,050.00
Resident Programs	8,280.87	16,561.74
<i>Fundraising Expenses</i>	14,440.00	14,440.00
<i>Operations Expenses</i>	10,400.00	16,650.00
<i>Program Indirect</i>	26,161.32	44,474.25
<i>Administrative Allocation</i>	37,089.24	63,051.72
Total Expense	\$332,378.14	\$655,439.01

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

Burlington Dismas House is facing an increased need to fundraise to meet increased expenses. Funding from the Burlington Housing Trust fund would help meet funding needs for maintaining the Buell Street House and programs, including utilities, groceries, and staffing. If we are not funded, it will increase the probability of a budget shortfall, which could potentially lead to cuts in programming.

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

Burlington Dismas House serves individuals who have been incarcerated and have who extremely low income. Approximately 90% of them have substance abuse issues and many have ongoing medical and mental health issues. Stable housing is crucial to their success.

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.

Kimberly Parsons

Print Name



Applicant Signature

11/10/23

Date