

**City of Burlington Housing Trust Fund (HTF)
FY 21 Capacity Grant Application**

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION HomeShare Vermont
CONTACT NAME Kirby Dunn, Executive Director
DAYTIME PHONE & E-MAIL Phone: 802-863-5625 E-Mail: Kirby@homesharenvermont.org
NAME OF PROJECT HomeShare Vermont
AMOUNT REQUESTED \$ 7,500
ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION START DATE (FOR FEASIBILITY/PREDEVELOPMENT GRANTS)
ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE 6/30/2021
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST \$556,000

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.):

HomeShare Vermont provides a comprehensive recruitment, screening and matching service to bring together those who have a home to share (homeshare hosts) with those looking for an affordable place to live (homeshare guests). Very often homeshare hosts are seniors or persons with disabilities who offer a private bedroom and shared common space in exchange for rent, help around the home or a combination of the two. In FY 2020 the average rent of all our matches was only \$314/month.

We have four times as many people looking for housing as we have homes available, and most people want to live in Burlington or the surrounding area, near jobs and transportation. We are focused on finding more homeshare hosts to meet this need. Funding from the Burlington Housing Trust Fund would go to general administration of the program and outreach and marketing to encourage more people to share their homes. This would include advertising, printed materials, front porch forums ads and a new video.

With the pandemic, we are seeing many challenges to creating new homesharing matches. Our highest concern is the health and safety of our program participants. We have added substantial changes to our process and our screening to make sure potential homesharers have similar lifestyles and risk assessments. More hosts are reluctant to share their home currently, unless we can find them a homesharer who is super responsible and cautious.

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

While we do not construct housing, we do create new affordable housing by working with hosts who have an extra bedroom and make that available to someone who needs a place to live. We provide a client driven process to assure we find the best match possible for both hosts and guests. For the past two years we have been working with the City and other non-profits to promote accessory dwelling units (ADU's) as a way for people to age in place, downsize or maintain more privacy. We have focused on outreach and public education and we are seeing a growing interest in ADU's in the city.

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

The City's Housing Action Plan discusses continued support and possible incentives to encourage more homesharing opportunities in the City to expand affordable housing. In addition, CEDO developed a comprehensive evaluation of our services in a white paper they released in January 2018. The report states, "Home sharing continues to be a very low-cost way of creating affordable and senior housing, while also enhancing clients' quality of life in a variety of ways outlined throughout this report."

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

Affordable housing is the highest priority in the City's Consolidated Plan, both creating new housing and preserving existing housing. Homesharing does this at a fraction of the cost of building new housing, renovating or providing rent subsidies. It costs us only \$2,500 per person to match a client to find an affordable place to live or to help someone else maintain the housing they have. In addition, HomeShare Vermont is specifically discussed in the Consolidated Plan as a program which provides Special Needs Housing for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities. The majority of our homeshare hosts are seniors or person with disabilities.

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

Our project budget is our organizational budget which we have attached. The Burlington Housing Trust Funds are included under municipal grants as we also get funding from South Burlington, Essex and Williston. As you can see from the budget we have developed a very diverse funding base. However, we have to raise over a quarter of our operating funds from fundraising and donations. This will be particularly difficult this year. Funding from the City of Burlington HTF is a crucial piece of our revenue.

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

HomeShare Vermont is a highly cost-effective program. To be able to house people or to help them maintain their housing at a cost of only \$2,500/year/person is probably one of the most cost-effective types of housing program around. If not funded, we will likely have to spend more of our time trying to raise funds. For example, if we don't receive this capacity grant we would need to find 150 new donors to donate our average gift of \$50.

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

Most hosts that we match are low-income, elderly or disabled, and living alone. We know from our outcomes data that 46% of our homeshare hosts told us they would not have been able to live at home safely without a homeshare guest. 80% told us they feel safer in their home, 79% less lonely and 72% were happier just by having someone living with them.

Most guests who find housing in our program are low or very low-income individuals. Homeshare guests were asked about their personal experience looking for housing prior to being matched by HomeShare Vermont and what challenges they might have faced 93% reported difficulty finding something they could afford, 39% said security deposits were a barrier and 34% said substandard housing was a problem.

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.

Print Name

Applicant Signature

Date

HomeShare Vermont FY 21 Budget

In Kind Donations	18,000
Interest-operations	1,000
Match Fees	9,000
GRANTS	
-State Grants	280,000
-Municipal Grants	13,000
-Foundations	90,000
-VHCB ADU Project	25,000
Donations	40,000
United Way	22,000
FUNDRAISING	
-Raffle	7,500
-Annual Appeal	25,500
-Event	25,000
Total Revenue	556,000

Salaries	297,000
Health & Dental Insurance	67,000
Payroll Taxes	29,700
Advertising/Outreach	25,000
Printing/photos/design	20,000
Occupancy	18,500
In-Kind Donated Services	18,000
Legal & Consultants, Audit	12,000
Donation & event expense	9,500
Travel/Mileage	8,500
Org. Insurance	8,000
VHCB ADU expenses	7,500
Video	6,600
Telephone/Internet	6,000
Technology	5,200
Postage	3,500
Miscellaneous	3,500
Background Checks	3,500
Trainings/Meetings	2,500
Supplies	2,500
Client Services Fund	2,500
Accounting/Bookkeeping	1,500
Total Expenses	556,000

**Homeshare Vermont FY 20 Year-End Progress Report
To Burlington Housing Trust Fund**

Our interim report sent to you in May including data through the end of March, just as COVID was hitting. From March to June our program continued to work with people in existing homesharing matches, to make sure they were safe and had what they needed but we stopped making new homesharing matches. This moratorium on new matches went through the end of the fiscal year, June 30th although we continued to accept new applications and position ourselves to be able to make new matches once it was safe to do so. Despite this challenge, we are pleased with our data for the year below.

2020 Burlington Housing Trust Report - July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020			
	Hosts	Guests	Total
Applications	17	58	75
Interviews	8	34	42
Persons in a Match	25	33	58
Unduplicated Burlington Persons Served	49	103	152
Total Number of Service Hours Provided	7,642		
Average Burlington Matches Rent	\$300		
Matches \$0 Rent	26%		
Total Rent Paid to All Burlington Hosts	\$63,353		

We see from the data above that our Burlington average rent was only \$300/month, below what our program-wide average was for the year. Over 25% of those Burlington matches charged no rent at all. Our Homeshare Guests provided over 7,500 hundred hours of service to their Hosts during the year and those hosts received over \$60,000 of rental income as well to help make ends meet.

We are also pleased to share with you that in the first quarter of FY 21 we have again begun to make matches, under very strict safety guidelines.

FY 20 Report
To the City of Burlington Housing Trust Fund
From HomeShare Vermont

July 1, 2019-March 31, 2020

Homesharing helps people stay in their homes while helping others to find affordable housing. The service we provide is one of screening, matchmaking and staying involved for the duration of the “match”. The decision of who to match with is up to the program participants. Our homesharing service is typically for people who would like someone to live in the home to provide companionship, some help with household chores and/or some rental income or help with utilities.

Persons Served

This year to date we worked with a total of 142 Burlington residents. Of these, 45 were looking to share their home (HomeShare Hosts) and 97 were looking for a place to live (HomeShare Guests). Of these we had 25 Burlington Hosts in a match and 33 Burlington guests during the year.

CHALLENGES & SUCCESSES

This has been a very challenging year for our program. In November, when the homesharing program in Barre closed their doors, we expanded our service area to include the counties of Washington, Lamoille and Orange in Central Vermont. We opened a satellite office in Montpelier and brought on roughly fifty clients from that very large and rural part of the state and have had to adjust our work accordingly.

Then just as things seems to stabilize and we were looking to expand our outreach efforts, COVID-19 happened. We spent the next two months working with our nearly 400 matched and unmatched participants but have been unable to make new matches due to StaySafe/StayHome. We are now developing protocol and safety measures for how we will be able to do our work going forward and have clients meet each other and start new homesharing matches.

ADU's

During this year we have spent a great deal of time working with the City of Burlington promoting ADU's as a way for seniors to age in place, families to live closer together or to have a homesharer with a bit more privacy. We were very encouraged when the City passed needed zoning changes in February. We have worked with 11 Burlington residents to date with site visits and outreach on the rules and expect at least 4 of these to move forward with permit applications. Our next focus is on educating more homeowners about the new rules and encouraging people to consider ADU's.

On June 4th from 12- 1PM, AARP Vermont and HomeShare Vermont will host a free informational webinar with housing experts and city staff. This webinar will cover the benefits of ADUs, share architectural design ideas, the latest zoning regulations passed by City Council, and the steps required to get an ADU permitted and built in the city of Burlington. We are also working on a guidebook which we will give to Burlington homeowners for free along with sample architectural plans.