

Housing Trust Fund
Capacity Grant Application

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION Spectrum Youth & Family Services
CONTACT NAME Sarah Woodard
DAYTIME PHONE & E-MAIL (802) 864-7423, swoodard@spectrumvt.org
NAME OF PROJECT Spectrum Youth Warming Shelter
AMOUNT REQUESTED \$10,000
ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION START DATE (FOR FEASIBILITY/PREDEVELOPMENT GRANTS) N/A
ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE N/A
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST \$499,101

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.):

This year, Spectrum's Youth Warming Shelter in Burlington is transitioning to year-round operations. The program initially operated seasonally from November through March, but with the ongoing affordable housing shortage, Spectrum has identified a need for a low-barrier, youth-friendly shelter that is available at all times of year. The Warming Shelter is open during overnight hours and has a 10-bed occupancy (with extra cots available in the event that more are needed). The shelter offers snacks, basic toiletries, supplies, and bedding for clients. The Warming Shelter is located downtown close to Spectrum's Drop-In Center and other programs for homeless and at-risk youth and is open from 5 pm to 8:30 am. During daytime hours when the Warming Shelter is closed, the Burlington Drop-In Center serves as a resource for meals and support for homeless youth who are staying at the shelter. This year, as Spectrum makes the transition to year-round operations, Housing Trust funds will support a portion of the additional staffing costs associated with this expansion.

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

N/A

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

Spectrum's housing programs for youth are integral to the City Housing Action Plan Goals to address homelessness. Under Action Plan goal *SL 1.1 Provide Public Services Homeless* and *AP-65 Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities – 91.220(i)*, both of which identify goals to "Address the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons."

Spectrum's Youth Warming Shelter was established in 2017 as a seasonal program in response to the needs of homeless young adults who were not well served by Burlington's other Warming Shelter, emergency shelter, and housing programs. Youth who seek emergency housing are often sleeping in cars, couch surfing, or trading sex or drugs in exchange for a place to stay. Programs designed for adults, including the motels that accept vouchers and shelter programs, are often unable to provide safe housing for youth who are 18 to 21 years old. While motel vouchers provide relief for some unhoused youth, only a handful of motels allow unaccompanied youth under age 21. Likewise, Burlington's low-barrier shelter only serves clients ages 21 and older. Regardless, at motels and shelters intended for all adults, youth routinely report feeling unsafe.

Young people need a low-barrier, safe, warm place in times of crisis. In these cases, the Warming Shelter is often the only alternative to nights on the street. After five seasons, the evidence of the need for the Warming Shelter remains clear. Last year 27 youth accessed the Warming Shelter, with an average of 6.7 youth in the shelter each night (up from 4.0 youth per night in the prior year). Of these youth, 55% had never accessed any of Spectrum's programs. Individual youth spent an average of 24.6 nights during the season, and more than two-thirds (69.2%) stayed more than one week. Four youth exited from the Warming Shelter into a Spectrum housing program (The Landing or Pearl Street Residence). For all of these young people, having a bed in a safe, youth-friendly environment even if only for a few nights, made a huge difference.

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

The Youth Warming Shelter contributes to the City’s Consolidated plans to ensure the availability of “decent housing,” which includes “assisting homeless persons obtain affordable housing;” and “assisting persons at risk of becoming homeless.” Specifically, the Warming Shelter addresses Plan goal SL 1.1., to *Provide Public Services for Homeless populations*, including unaccompanied minors. The Youth Warming Shelter adds 10 population-specific, emergency shelter beds, responding to the needs of vulnerable young adults. In addition, many youth who begin receiving housing support at the Warming Shelter eventually transition into one of Spectrum’s housing programs (The Landing and Pearl Street Residence), placing them on a pathway to safe, stable housing.

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

The Warming Shelter is supported through a combination of state funding and philanthropic contributions, including grants, corporate gifts, and individual donations. With the program’s expansion this year, operating expenses are projected to more than double, from \$221,350 to \$499,101. This increased cost is primarily due to additional staffing needed to increase daily operations from five program months to twelve program months. Contributions are allocated by program at the end of Spectrum’s fiscal year (September 30). Programs within Spectrum’s Basic Needs and Stable Homes cluster (Burlington and St. Albans Drop-In Centers, The Landing, Pearl Street Residence, and Warming Shelter) are overwhelmingly (~70%) funded through charitable contributions, with an ongoing need for fundraising to support operations.

Revenue	
AHS-DCF- Housing Opportunity Program	272,019
Contributions (*Anticipated/ Pending)	227,082
Total Revenue	499,101
Expense	
Salaries and Wages	294,229
Employee Taxes and Benefits	89,000
Occupancy Costs	40,225
Professional Services	1,300
Depreciation	2,000
Program and Client Expenses	8,500
Office Supplies and Postage	250
Travel	50
Telephone	1,000
Insurance	2,100
Technology Expense	2,900
Food	2,500
Conferences and Meetings	-
Miscellaneous	680
Advertising	2,000
Total Expense	499,101

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

As state housing policies and programs, including the motel voucher program, have changed in recent years, there are few viable shelter options for unaccompanied youth. When there are no motels or adult shelters accepting young people, Spectrum is forced to distribute tents and sleeping bags to youth, leaving them vulnerable to a host of safety and health risks. Researchers have shown that shelter programs for young homeless people intervene at a critical developmental stage with a greater likelihood of resulting in sustained, stable housing. Homeless youth who do not receive supportive interventions are at especially high risk of becoming chronically homeless adults, with the potential to require community safety net services for decades. In its more than 50-year history in Burlington, Spectrum has effectively supported thousands of homeless youth to stabilize their circumstances.

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

The Youth Warming Shelter meets the needs of youth with the greatest obstacles. Many youth who come to the Warming Shelter have exited foster care, have histories of trauma, identify as LGBTQ+, or have otherwise experienced significant challenges as they enter adulthood. Nearly every youth who seeks Spectrum’s help has no income or a very low-income and qualifies for Medicaid and other income-based programs. Any young person aged 18-24 years-old who lacks a safe place to stay is eligible to stay at the Youth Warming Shelter. Unlike other shelter and housing programs, the Warming Shelter is low barrier by design, welcoming youth with active substance use or mental health concerns, and youth who do not meet eligibility requirements of other housing programs.

Signature

Please check each box that applies:

- X **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.

- X **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.

Mark Redmond

Print Name



11/14/23

Applicant Signature

Date