

**Burlington Housing Trust Fund  
FY2017 Capacity Grant Applications**

**Agency/Organization:** Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS)

**Project:** Fund staffing and operating costs at the COTS Waystation, a 36-bed emergency shelter that serves adult men and women experiencing homelessness.

**Funding Request:** \$7,500



**BURLINGTON HOUSING TRUST FUND**  
**COTS Waystation – Capacity Grant Proposal**

*Submitted by the Committee on Temporary Shelter*  
*September 30, 2016*

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1. Amount of funding being sought and number of units proposed for housing projects:  
\$7,500
  
2. Project/program narrative, including a detailed time-line and how BHTF funds will be used:

***Background***

The Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) provides emergency shelter, homeless 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 over 2,600 people annually through a variety of programs. Nearly half of all COTS clients are residents of Burlington.

This proposal 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 case management, 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.

***Program Goals and Activities***

The Waystation is a program shelter with two main goals: to provide a safe and warm place to sleep and to help people regain their independence. These goals shape our program activities.

We meet our first goal by operating the Waystation every single night of the year, giving homeless individuals access to emergency shelter. The program is open 6 p.m. to 8 a.m., 365 days a year. The shelter has the capacity to serve 36 adults, with 28 beds in the men's dorm and eight beds in the women's dorm. The shelter also provides our guests with a place to store their few belongings, a washer and dryer, and clean bathrooms with shower facilities. The lower level of the Waystation is a communal space for reading, watching TV, and socializing. This space, along with programming in shelter, helps guests develop a sense of community and build the social support networks necessary to engender success once they secure permanent housing.

To receive a spot at the Waystation, new guests first go to the Daystation, our daytime shelter. At 9 a.m. daily, COTS staff does an intake session and orientation with guests; staff also refers them to Safe Harbor Clinic to get a tuberculosis and general health screening. This way, when new guests arrive at the Waystation that evening they know that they are sure to have a spot and they know what to expect of the experience. This reduces pressure on the guests, as well as shelter staff, who do not have to do additional paperwork with guests. Instead, they can focus on welcoming and orienting the guests.

When shelter beds are full and there is inclement weather, we operate on “overflow status,” allowing additional guests to stay on couches or in recliners. Generally, this situation only develops during the winter, but occasionally we see overflow guests in the summer as well.

Although COTS shelters are dry, we offer “white flag” nights when the temperature is below freezing or generally inhospitable. This means that individuals who would otherwise not be eligible to enter the Waystation, due to intoxication, are able to find respite from the bitter cold. Individuals are offered a recliner (rather than a bunk) for the night. We also open one hour earlier so guests can find refuge from the adverse weather conditions.

We achieve our second goal, helping people gain independence, by providing all guests at the Waystation with a case manager who can help them develop an Individualized Service Plan (ISP). We utilize motivational interviewing techniques and the Self Sufficiency Outcome Matrix (SSOM) to help guests outline the steps necessary to regain their independence. The plans include action steps that help clients secure income (through employment or benefits) and find suitable and affordable permanent housing. COTS case managers connect clients with community partners who offer job training and financial skills building. They also link clients with vital resources, such as VA benefits, SSI, Section 8 vouchers, and mental health services. Since the Waystation is open only in the evenings and has limited space, this case management happens during the day at COTS Daystation facility.

In addition to working on their ISP goals (as set with a case manager) Waystation guests are also expected save 70% of their income, and complete daily chores. Every Wednesday the Waystation has a house meeting with guests. Attendees can give feedback during an open forum or they can request ahead of time to have a specific item put on the agenda. When there are 36 people living in a small congregate setting, having a voice on these matters is paramount to the success of the program. Minutes from the house meetings are shared with case managers and other shelter staff so they are aware of concerns.

***Timeline***

Activity	Dates
Provide overnight emergency shelter for up to 36 guests each night	ONGOING
Connect approximately 300 guests each year with case management	ONGOING
Provide structure for guests to save 70% of their income while staying at the Waystation	ONGOING

***Budget***

Operating the Waystation costs approximately \$309,917 annually. A \$7,500 capacity grant from the Burlington Housing Trust Fund would fund staffing and operational costs at the Waystation.

**3. Description of the need to be served by the project/program:**

The Waystation, an overnight shelter for single adults, serves some of the most vulnerable members of our community, homeless men and women. Many are struggling with ongoing issues that make finding and maintaining permanent housing a significant challenge. Several guests are veterans, medically fragile, or elderly. Some grapple with addiction or mental illness. 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.

Many individuals experiencing homelessness struggle with chronic and/or debilitating medical issues. By referring them 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. This past year, second-year students and doctors created the "Know Pressure" initiative where they worked with guests in shelter on strategies to help them lower their blood pressure, such as diet and nutrition, exercise, stress relieving techniques, and meditation.

The prolonged housing crisis in Chittenden County continues to have a major impact on rates of homelessness in our community. Although improving, Burlington still has one of the nation's lowest vacancy rates (less than 2 percent). The 2016 Fair Market Rent for an efficiency apartment in the Burlington area is \$923 per month. To afford that, without paying more than the recommended 30 percent of their income on housing, renters must make \$36,750 annually (or \$17.67 an hour) – far beyond the grasp of many working low income individuals. Ninety-nine percent of clients we served at the Waystation last year are considered "extremely low income" earning 30% or less (\$17,650 for 2016) of the area median income as defined by HUD. These factors leave Waystation guests with few options for permanent housing.

**4. Organizational budget:**

See Attachment A. – COTS FY16 organizational Budget

Please note that COTS fiscal year end 9.30.16. Our FY16 budget will not be completed and approved by our board of directors until November of 2016.

**5. Project budget, including a line item breakdown of sources and uses (only if project funding is sought); indicate which sources are already committed and which are pending:**

N/A

**6. Plan for long term affordability (only if project funding is sought):**

N/A

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

The Burlington Housing Trust Fund (BHTF) provided \$7,500 to support COTS Waystation for the 2016 fiscal year (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016). During this grant period, the Waystation achieved the following outcomes:

During the previous twelve months (July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016), the Waystation had the following outcomes:

- 220 unduplicated individuals received emergency overnight shelter;
- 220 unduplicated individuals received referral for support services through COTS case management and other community services;
- 220 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 32 the previous year;
- Waystation guests stayed an average of 57 nights compared with an average of 52 nights during the previous year;
- 188 nights of overflow emergency shelter.

Aurora Lenz-Watson, Waystation Manager shares her personal experience with a recent guest that helps illustrate how the Waystation breaks the fall for people in need and helps them get back on their feet:

When I first met "George" he came into the Waystation he was very inebriated. He was a loner with not much hope for his future. Unfortunately he was not able to stay at the Waystation because the Waystation is a program shelter with a sober environment. A few months later "George" came back to the Waystation after he committed to staying sober and getting his life back on track. He secured a bunk at the Waystation and attended AA meetings each day. "George" began to grow in self-confidence and emanate hope. Other guests noticed this positive change in "George" and were drawn to him. Many would join him for AA meetings and for dinners at the Salvation Army. Once "George" was a sober for a few months, he took on the challenge of preparing himself for employment. He had not worked in many years but he always loved to cook. Sometimes he would make meals for guests at the Daystation. Everyone loved his cooking. "George" enrolled in the Community Kitchen Academy, a Vermont Foodbank culinary job training program operated at the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf. "George" thrived in this environment. He graduated from the program with many new skills, friends, and connections to local kitchens. Soon after graduating he got a job working in a kitchen and moved from the Waystation to the Smith House, a COTS transitional living house. The last time I saw "George" he was beaming with pride. He showed me his certificate and told me about his new job. "George" passed away from a heart attack soon after. I was deeply saddened by the news. However, I am happy for "George" that he got the chance to change his life around for the better before it was too late. In the six months that I knew "George" he went from being homeless, alone, and overwhelmed by his addiction to a happy man with a job, a room at the Smith House, and many friends.

## COTS 2015-16 Budget Worksheet

	TOTAL FY 16 Budget
<b>REVENUE</b>	
UNITED WAY	
UNITED WAY: Chittenden County	126,249
UNITED WAY: Other	-
Total UNITED WAY	126,249
GENERAL PUBLIC SUPPORT	
Cookies	8,862
Bequests/Planned Gifts	5,000
Corporations	90,000
Foundation Grants	535,000
Stock Gifts	36,000
General Contributions	220,000
Holiday	25,000
Mailings	214,000
Other Special Events	56,500
Phonathon	187,000
Prospecting	17,000
Walkathon	197,000
Total GENERAL PUBLIC SUPPORT	1,591,362
FEDERAL GRANTS	
Advocacy	48,910
ANFC	52,000
CDBG	8,256
ESGP	-
FEMA	8,000
PEER	62,000
SSVF	-
Reach Up (PATH)	119,917
Total FEDERAL GRANTS	299,083
STATE GRANTS	
CHG (Formerly HRF)	-
Family Supportive Housing	183,334
ESGP	-
HOP	388,273
ESD WamSltr	28,598
Reach Up (PATH)	152,623
State Veterans Grant	-

Vt Education	14,478
<b>Total STATE GRANTS</b>	<b>767,306</b>
<b>MUNICIPALITIES</b>	
BHTF	12,500
Local, Cities and Towns	16,500
<b>Total MUNICIPALITIES</b>	<b>29,000</b>
<b>Total Fundraising</b>	<b>2,813,000</b>
<b>OTHER</b>	
Grant Subrecipients	(74,000)
VT Children's Trust	12,134
Veterans Per Diem Fees	237,000
Program Revenue	33,400
Pay It Forward FSH Allowance	(27,750)
Donated Svc Revenue	-
Interest/Investment Income	65,000
<b>Total OTHER</b>	<b>245,784</b>
<b>RENTAL INCOME AND REIMBURSEMENTS</b>	
Rent - 95 North Ave	-
Tenants Rental Income	353,400
HAP Pmts for Tenants	-
Miscellaneous Income	11,600
Less Rent Subsidized by COTS	-
<b>Total Rent/Reimb</b>	<b>365,000</b>
Donated Equip & Svcs	-
Deferred Grants	-
Carry Forward Fund	107,791
<b>Total REVENUE</b>	<b>3,531,575</b>
<b><u>EXPENSE</u></b>	
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Salaries and Wages	1,905,745
FICA	142,550
SUI	10,803
Life & Disability Insurance	13,446
Medical Insurance	109,850
Transition Contingency	-
Dental Insurance	12,610
Workers Comp	23,178



Section 125 Benefit	-
<i>Employee Health &amp; Dental Cont</i>	-
403b Contributions	37,940
Employee Plan Management	5,054
EAP and COSTCO	4,665
<b>Total PERSONNEL</b>	<b>2,265,841</b>
<b>OTHER OPERATING</b>	
Operating Lease Canal Street	138,156
Furnishings	5,000
Infestation avoidance	17,695
Maintenance & Repair	145,680
Capital Obligation	60,000
Maintenance & Cleaning Supplies	37,328
Property Management Fee	57,300
Americorp/Vista	30,416
Rent	44,917
Life Safety & Security	12,930
Insurance	41,342
Property Tax/PILOT	6,434
Utilities	110,000
Telephone	14,846
Contract Janitorial	28,200
Contract Labor	37,551
Technology Supplies & Equipment	31,731
IT & Network Support	50,692
HMIS Beidge	10,000
Office Supplies & Services	11,800
Printing & Reproduction	26,783
Postage	14,234
Dues & Subscriptions	3,988
Development Event Expenses	20,000
Volunteer Expense	427
Hiring & HR	7,005
Kudos	4,000
Travel	2,250
Interest Expense	5,678
Training & Development	4,000
Board Expenses	2,595
Legal & Professional Fees	8,000
Accounting, Audit & Banking	51,344
Miscellaneous	2,000
Donated Service Expense	-
<b>Total OTHER OPERATING</b>	<b>1,044,321</b>
<b>CLIENT SUPPLIES/ACTIVITIES</b>	
Client: Early Education Initiative (E	3,696

Client: Meals	4,191
Client Prevention	100,000
Client Rehousing	30,650
Client Telephone & Utilities	11,441
Client: Translation Services	2,350
Client Transportation	5,569
Client Rent	53,334
Client Supplies/Activities	10,181
Misc. Client	-
Total CLIENT SUPPLIES/ACTIVITIES	221,412
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>3,531,573</b>
<b>NET ORDINARY INCOME</b>	<b>-</b>