



CITY OF STAUNTON, VIRGINIA

SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO FY 2019 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR CARES ACT FUNDS CDBG

Overview/Objective

The federal CARES Act, P.L. 116-136, made available supplemental funding through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. \$207,590 in CDBG-CV funds were allocated to the City of Staunton by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (USHUD).

Special USHUD waivers permits CDBG-CV funding to be utilized for public services and other activities that will prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. The broad flexible waivers will permit the City of Staunton to address the challenges facing the city.

Public Comment

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) granted several waivers to program procedure to expedite the use of these funds. These waivers included an ability to amend the Citizen Participation Plan and allow for a much shorter timeframe for public display, use of the internet to make the Substantial Amendment available to the public and use of virtual meetings to allow for input and comment. The City of Staunton advertised and made the Substantial Amendment available to the public on June 1, 2020 for a period of 10 days and held a virtual public hearing by call in on June 9, 2020 at 2:00pm.

Rationale for amendment

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, (CARES Act) which was signed into law on March 27, 2020, provides funds through the CDBG, ESG and HOPWA programs. The CARES Act provides for allocations of funds to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

The City of Staunton has taken stock of local needs and the parameters of each of the programs and determined how the funds allocated will be used in this community. The following activities will be funded:

- Subsistence Payments (rental, utility and mortgage assistance)
- Shelter Operations
- Food Banks
- Health Services

The four (4) main objectives of the City of Staunton COVID response would be to:

- Providing emergency payments for rental, mortgage and utility assistance to low-to-moderate income households.
- Provide funding for additional emergency shelter staffing due to the increased shelter space needs resulting from social distancing.
- Provide food assistance to low to moderate income households.
- Increase outreach and education to underserved populations to provide prevention messaging in socially vulnerable areas, as identified by CDC social vulnerability index maps, of the City.

1. CV Salvation Army Homeless Prevention (rent/utilities/mortgage payments):

City of Staunton residents have experienced significant financial hardship due to social distancing restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The goal of the subsistence payments program would be to provide low-to-moderate income, qualifying households short term (no more than 3 months) rental and/or utility assistance.

Program Budget

The Salvation Army estimates serving 200 people with rent/utilities/mortgage payments with a total budget of \$40,000.

2. CV Salvation Army Food Assistance

The City of Staunton residents have experienced significant financial hardship due to social distancing restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The Salvation Army's volunteers distribute groceries twice a week to local school stops and once a week delivering groceries to residents unable to leave their homes. This program will benefit low-to-moderate income households within the City of Staunton.

Program Budget

The Salvation Army will serve approximately 800 low income people with a \$9,482 budget.

3. CV Community Foundation of Blue Ridge Homeless Prevention (rent/utilities/mortgage payments):

City of Staunton residents have experienced significant financial hardship due to social distancing restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The goal of the subsistence payments program would be to provide low-moderate income, qualifying households short term (no more than 3 months) rental and/or utility assistance.

Program Budget

Community Foundation of Blue Ridge estimates serving 20 people with rent/utilities/mortgage payments with a total budget of \$26,590.

4. CV Blue Ridge Legal Services

The City of Staunton has recognized the need to provide legal aid services to persons at risk of homelessness as a result of COVID-19. Such services include legal services to provide legal aid to low- and moderate-income households facing evictions. Blue Ridge Legal Services will hire an additional attorney for the balance of 2020 to add the capacity needed to meet the anticipated demand for legal aid for City of Staunton residents when the courts reopen.

Program Budget

Blue Ridge Legal Services estimates spending \$25,000, serving approximately 20 people.

5. CV Shelter Operations Valley Mission:

The City of Stanton has recognized the need to assist Valley Mission's effort in providing emergency shelter for person's experiencing homelessness during the pandemic. As a result of increased shelter space needs resulting from social distancing measures, there is a need for additional emergency shelter staff support. Financial support will provide 10 weeks of gross salary for emergency shelter staff.

Program Budget

The City of Staunton estimates providing emergency shelter to 46 people with a total budget of \$30,000.

6. CV Health Education and Services

Funds will be used to hire a Community Health Worker (CHW) to provide education and resources on COVID-19 to underserved areas in the City of Staunton. Funds will

support the CHW salary, and this position can be used for both outreach and contact tracing for Staunton. Funds will also be used to support purchase of hand sanitizer, masks and other items that help with COVID prevention to distribute to communities as well as printing of educational materials. CHW can also work with the Office of Health Equity (VDH) to develop maps of neighborhoods at high risk for severe COVID disease due to age/chronic medical conditions/low income/high density housing and develop strategies to reach these populations.

Program Budget

Central Shenandoah Health District will serve 500 people with a total budget of \$35,000.

7. CV Program Administration

In order to provide oversight and programmatic technical assistance to grantees, The City of Staunton will use the maximum allowed percentages for both CDBG-CV to pay for program administration.

Program Budget

Total cost for Program Administration is \$41,518.