



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Grants Management Division

M e m o r a n d u m

TO: Bruce K. Walden, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, AICP, City Planner/Director

DATE: March 5, 2003

**SUBJECT: NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA) FOR THE
COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE TO HELP END HOMELESSNESS;
NOTICE**

Description

On January 27, 2003, the U. S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, in cooperation with the U. S. Dept. of Health and Human Services and the Veterans Administration issued a notice of funding available for permanent supportive housing to assist chronically homeless persons with disabilities who are veterans. Only two entities may apply for these funds: a public housing authority or a government unit. At the present time, the City of Urbana has allocated \$100,000 in CDBG monies to assist Prairie Center Health Systems, Inc. in the renovation of five bedrooms on the third floor of its residential treatment facility into permanent housing for persons recovering from substance/alcohol abuse issues. When this NOFA became available, it seemed to present an opportunity to apply for funding that would support these five bedrooms with Shelter Plus Care rental assistance for a period of five years. After some discussion, Provena Behavioral Health Services at Mental Health Center (MHC) decided it could convert eight one-bedroom apartment units to permanent supportive housing if they could be included in the grant application. Center for Women in Transition has also decided to join the application, committing a two-bedroom single-family housing unit to the proposed program. Therefore, at this time, staffs from these organizations are working to complete an application for rental assistance to provide 15 units of permanent supportive housing that would be targeted to chronically homeless individuals who are veterans, and who are recovering from alcohol/drug abuse and mental health issues. The City of Urbana would be the applicant and would administer the grant monies, should the application be approved. Prairie Center, Mental Health Center and Center for Women in Transition would provide the necessary housing units, and Prairie Center and MHC would provide the necessary case management and treatment activities, as these units would target persons recovering from alcohol/drug abuse and mental health issues. The city would enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Veterans' Administration in Danville for services to be provided to eligible veterans and with Frances Nelson Health Clinic and the Public Health District to provide primary medical services and outreach and intervention services.

It has not yet been determined the full amount of funding to be requested, nor has the collaborative process been fully developed. Besides the requested funding for 15 permanent housing units, Prairie Center, Provena Behavioral Health, the VA, and possibly Frances Nelson will be applying for supportive service monies. However, all of this information is necessary for the application and will be presented to Council at the time the application is complete. It is anticipated that a mostly

completed draft would be presented to the Committee of the Whole on March 24, 2003, with approval from Council needed at its April 7, 2003 meeting. The application is due in Washington, D. C. April 14, 2003.

Issues

None identified at this time. Staff would like to take this opportunity to brief the committee on the upcoming application and answer any questions that might be raised. However, at its April 7th meeting, the City Council will need to pass a resolution approving the submittal of this application.

Background

During the week of February 17, 2003, TIMES Center provided meals and emergency shelter services to an average of 62 single men each day. Of those individuals, 50% had experienced four or more episodes of homelessness in the last three years and 20% had been homeless for more than a year (definition of chronically homeless). In addition to the emergency services, there are 20 beds in the transitional housing program at TIMES Center. Of the current participants, 16 meet the definition of chronically homeless – 10 experienced multiple episodes of homelessness over the last three years and 6 have been homeless for a year or more. Data from January-March 2003 reported by Prairie Center's residential treatment program reveals that of the 45 persons served, 6 persons met the definition of chronically homeless (5 with four or more episodes of homelessness in the last three years and 1 who has been homeless for more than a year). Given the above information and considering that between 12 and 31 men of TIMES Center's average population are defined as chronically homeless, it is estimated that at least 15-20 persons each quarter could be eligible to move into the permanent supportive housing proposed under this NOFA.

In the most recent survey of homeless persons in the Urbana-Champaign area (November 2000), 14% or 32 of the 229 homeless adults enumerated identified themselves as veterans. This is comparable to the 1998 survey in which 15% or 41 respondents of the 271 homeless adults were veterans. Prairie Center documents that 7.8% of the persons served are veterans and data from January-March, 2003 reported by its residential treatment program reveals four of the 45 persons served are veterans; Provena Behavioral Health is presently assessing its population. TIMES Center reported that during its last fiscal year, July 1, 2002 – June 30, 2002, there were 146 veterans among the 914 homeless men served (16%). In a more recent estimate of the veteran population served by this agency, there were eight vets among the last 33 intakes (February 2003) admitted to emergency shelter (24%).

Information regarding the high incidence of alcohol/drug abuse and chronic mental health issues may be found in the City of Urbana/Urbana HOME Consortium Consolidated Plan for Program Years 2000-2004 under Section II. Strategic Plan (specifically pages 28-36). Additionally, the Con Plan clearly designates the need for more permanent and permanent supportive housing as a priority.

Options

To be determined at a later date, but most likely either to approve the submittal of this application or not. If Council wishes to disallow such an application, it would be best to make such a

determination right away so as to save a great deal of time and effort on the part of city staff and staff from the collaborating agencies.

Fiscal Impacts

If the application is funded, the City will receive 8% of the total grant amount for administrative costs, to be divided over the five-year term of the grant.

Recommendations

Staff would recommend that the Committee consider the possibility of such an application and take this opportunity to ask for any further information needed to decide whether or not to apply.

Memorandum Prepared By:

Karen Rasmussen, Grants Coordinator II