



Date: January 17, 2023

To: Wanda S. Page, City Manager
Through: Bertha T. Johnson, Deputy City Manager
From: Robert D. Morales, Senior Grants Manager
Subject: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Project - Reentry Housing Support

Executive Summary

On November 3, 2021, Durham County Criminal Justice Resource Center (CJRC) submitted proposal “Reentry Housing Support” for funding in the amount of \$920,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to increase the number of beds available to justice-involved Durham residents over a four-year period. This will include housing support and provide up to three months of affordable housing through Local Reentry Council (LRC) partners for up to sixteen Durham residents per year for a total of 64 residents by year four. On May 18, 2022, City Council approved \$644,000 funding for this entity. Staff has reviewed the revised proposal and recommends funding.

Motion

To authorize the City Manager to execute an ARPA subrecipient grant agreement with Durham County Criminal Justice Resource Center in an amount not to exceed \$644,000.

Background

The original proposal from CJRC requested \$920,000.00 from the ARPA funds, under core category of Negative Economic Impacts, to increase the number of beds available to justice-involved Durham residents over a four-year period. This will include providing up to three months of affordable housing through LRC partners for up to 16 Durham residents per year for a total of 64 residents by year four. CJRC-LRC will contract with a non-profit community providers to provide intensive case management and system navigation to residents in LRC supported housing. The project will increase the housing stock that is available to Durham residents who are justice-involved by up to 20 beds. CJRC will work with LRC housing providers who have a strong track record to develop these beds.

Issues and Analysis

In December 2020, the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS) reported 1,946 individuals were supervised by Community Corrections in Durham County. In the same year, an additional 600 were released from the North Carolina state prison system. Additionally, the Durham Sheriff’s Office reported 6,035 arrestees were processed in the Durham County jail in 2020. Many of these individuals need affordable housing upon release or during supervision. LRC keeps monthly data on all persons seeking housing and employment services. LRC has worked closely with NCDPS and is

the Durham point of contact for lists of approximately 50% of Durham residents who are within six months of release. Once information is obtained, LRC staff contacts individuals prior to release to begin to identify local housing options for those who need them. Partners within LRC regularly report increasing difficulty in obtaining all types of housing. LRC has 56 affiliated organizations with staff. These organizations seek transformational change in the barriers to housing, employment, and services for the reentry population. They work together to make Durham a City of Second Chances.

Over the past two years, the LRC Housing Committee has worked to identify the best ways to increase housing options and understand the systemic barriers to those options. The pandemic exposed and exacerbated those barriers. A working group of the Housing Committee has been actively involved in the details of proposal development. The LRC Housing Committee is primarily composed of Durham non-profit housing providers and organizations who are actively working with justice-involved individuals to find housing. Approximately 40% of active committee members have experienced incarceration directly and all work with people who are justice-involved. The committee reviews data to assess ongoing needs for additional housing, highlights need for Intensive Case Management, and provides feedback on residents' success with housing providers. It also offers strategies for increasing resident's success, suggests possible adjustments, and comments on regular reports received.

In June 2021, Duke Public Policy student Matt Landers completed a master's thesis entitled "Justice Involved Homelessness" in Durham County. The thesis collected and analyzed data on individuals housed with assistance from the CJRC who were also identified as homeless in the City of Durham's data. Those most at risk for homelessness were individuals with mental health diagnoses. Another study is currently underway by Dr. Nicole Schramm-Sapyta for the Durham County Stepping Up Initiative. The study matches individuals released from the Durham County Jail and the Duke Emergency Department. Dr. Schramm-Sapyta found that persons who are justice-involved and diagnosed with serious mental illness have unique challenges. Local data and experience have also shown that those with no employment and no income also benefit from Intensive Case Management as they work to stabilize their housing situations.

The target population for this proposal is Durham residents seeking housing services through the LRC who are returning from prison, detention, or serving terms of probation or parole. Typically, this population has no income or are low-income. Residents seeking LRC services and housing providers working with LRC are primarily located in Census Tracts 10.01, 10.02, 13.01 and zip code 27703. The LRC Director previously lived in that zip code for 45 years and can discuss it in detail with justice-involved residents seeking housing. LRC prioritizes providers who are actively involved in the neighborhoods where they are located. Some of these properties may have been dilapidated or were used for illegal drug activities prior to being renovated and made available for affordable housing. Post-renovation, these homes help bring stability to the residents as well as to the neighborhood.

The administering agency will be the CJRC on behalf of the LRC. The CJRC is a department within County Government.

CJRC will track progress and monitor the impact of this project via the following metrics:

- the number of individuals housed monthly and annually;
- the increase of criminal justice involved Durham residents housed in short term beds;
- the average length of stay of criminal justice involved Durham residents housed in short term beds;
- the total number of new beds, both short and long-term, available to applicable Durham residents;
- the number of individuals served monthly and annually by intensive case management; and
- the data on the number of individuals who remain in stable housing for 3 months or longer and their length of stay.

Alternatives

The City Council can choose not to accept the staff recommendation.

Financial Impact

\$644,000 is available for this purpose from the funding source of the ARPA federal funds. The City of Durham received \$51,881,733 in two distributions; the first distribution was received on June 1, 2021, in the amount of \$25,940,866.50; the remaining amount was received May 2022. The City will have until December 2024 to obligate the funds. Recipients have until December 2026 to spend the funds.

Equal Business Opportunity Summary

Due to the nature of this agenda item, a review by the Finance Department was not required.

Contractor Workforce Diversity & Hiring Practices

Due to the nature of this agenda item, obtaining Contractor Workforce Diversity & Hiring Practices information would not be applicable.

Attachments

Durham County Criminal Justice Resource Center Subrecipient Grant Agreement