
Sponsor: Housing Stability

Meeting Date: 9/27/2022

Title: Grant Awards from Minnesota Department of Human Services and Saint Paul Foundation for Heading Home Ramsey - Bridge to Housing

File Number: 2022-485

Background and Rationale:

Heading Home Ramsey (HHR) is the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandated Continuum of Care (CoC) for Ramsey County. Ramsey County is the lead agency of the CoC, providing coordination, staffing, grant, and contract management support. The CoC includes more than 100 partners who work together to end homelessness:

Our vision is to work together to create a community where homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring - where we eliminate racial disparities, and everyone is housed. We do so by delivering effective, people-centered, integrated responses that are equitable and driven by community voice, advocacy, and learning.

A temporary infusion of one-time COVID-19 funds enabled the community to mount a brief, emergency response to Centers for Disease Control recommendations. These funds enabled individuals to be moved off the streets and out of unsafe congregate settings and allowed a temporary increase in our shelter supply. This was a focused investment in a time-limited program to better protect public health.

This temporary emergency response was successful and the CoC solicited support from the Governor's Office, the Minnesota Legislature, and the philanthropic community to continue four key pillars:

- 1) A 100 bed, single room occupancy shelter for adults with integrated support services.
- 2) A 100-bed shelter for families with integrated support services.
- 3) Operation of a day service shelter, providing supportive services to 175 individuals per day.
- 4) A low-barrier pilot program, serving frequent users of emergency shelter with intensive, 24/7 staffing.

While legislative efforts were unsuccessful, in June 2022, Governor Walz recommended \$6 million of available state American Rescue Plan Act funds be allocated to the CoC priorities and that recommendation was approved by the Legislative Advisory Commission on COVID Response in July 2022. These funds, received as a grant from the state Department of Human Services, will be used to support the CoC homelessness priorities to the extent possible. These resources must be used by June 30, 2023, the end of the state fiscal year.

The HHR Governing Board is responsible to make all CoC funding decisions. Staff from the Office of Economic Growth and Community Investment service team and the Housing Stability department provide administrative support to the CoC. In anticipation of resources coming available, the CoC and Ramsey County worked together to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit interest from partners to carry out the CoC's recommendations, collectively referred to as the Bridge to Housing. The partners selected through the process will enter into agreements for those services to be provided during the operational period of October 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023.

To enable efficient implementation of this grant to support residents, county board approval is sought to accept the pledged funds, designate the funds to Housing Stability department, authorize the county manager to execute the agreement and enter into subsequent agreements, including sole source, in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures simultaneous to the grant agreement process with the state. It is estimated that the state's process will be completed and have an effective start date of October 1, 2022. A draft of the grant agreement framework with the state is attached for reference and a final version will be approved by the county manager.

In addition to the partners selected through the RFP, distribution of unallocated funds will be determined by the CoC Governing Board with input and prioritization by the CoC Steering Committee. Proposed spending from funds unallocated through the RFP process will require CoC Steering Committee sponsorship. All proposed ideas will be evaluated and prioritized by the CoC Steering Committee based upon the community's need for expanded shelter capacity and unsheltered supports within Ramsey County. These prioritized ideas will then be discussed by the Governing Board, which will make the final determination on how to best leverage these funds in our community. Those proposals will then have agreements executed through Ramsey County in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures including through the sole source policy process authorized in this action for agreements over \$175,000 threshold.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Accept a grant award from the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity for Heading Home Ramsey - Bridge to Housing for the period of October 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 in the amount of \$6,000,000.
2. Accept a grant award from the Saint Paul Foundation for the Heading Home Ramsey- Bridge to Housing for the period of March 1, 2022, to December 30, 2022, in the amount of \$100,000.
3. Direct the County Manager to establish a project budget and designate these funds accordingly.
4. Authorize the County Manager to execute the grant agreements in a form approved by the County Attorney's Office.
5. Authorize the County Manager to enter into agreements and execute amendments to agreements in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures, provided the amounts are within the limits of the grant funding.
6. Authorize the County Manager to enter into sole source agreements over \$175,000 upon the condition the Heading Home Ramsey Governing Board approved the request and in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures, provided the amounts are within the limits of the grant funding.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner McGuire, seconded by Commissioner McDonough. Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Carter, Frethem, MatasCastillo, McDonough, McGuire, Ortega, and Reinhardt

By: 

Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board