

Town of Craftsbury Application for Community Development Block Grant Cares Act Public Facility Funding (CDBG-CV) to Renovate Air Handling System at Craftsbury Care Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Description

The Craftsbury Community Care Center (CCCC) is requesting that the Town of Craftsbury apply for Community Development Block Grant Cares Act Public Facility Funding (CDBG-CV) from the State of Vermont, with the CCCC as subgrantee. This funding was allocated by the federal government to support local agencies and organizations in responding to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Background

The mission of the CCCC is to provide a caring, homelike, affordable residence for seniors in a setting that encourages independence, activities and involvement with families, friends and the larger community. We have 24 resident rooms available, each with a private bath, patio and individual heating controls. We are an essential part of the Craftsbury community, serving as the center of our community's Meals on Wheels program, providing employment to community members and supporting local vendors. At this time, 70% of our residents are in the Low to Middle Income (LMI) range. This allows us to meet the LMI threshold, which is an eligibility requirement for this funding.

When our building was constructed in 1994, the standards for indoor air quality were lower than current standards and well below today's recommendations for limiting airborne disease transmission. While we have been aware that our air handling system needed replacement for some time, the Covid-19 epidemic has made this a more urgent concern. Although we rigorously observed all CDC guidelines, at one point during the epidemic we had 29 infected members, 15 residents and 14 staff, and we were very distressed to lose two of our residents to the disease. We attribute the rapid spread of the disease in our building to our inadequate ventilation. While we became aware of this problem because of Covid 19, it is a fundamental health issue, as high quality air helps maintain overall health and prevents the transmission of a range of diseases, including yearly surges of influenza.

Overview of Work

The funds we seek will support the a major renovation of the facility. It focuses on three aspects of its infrastructure: air quality, heat distribution and energy efficiency.

- **AIR QUALITY:** Air quality improvements will include increasing the amount of fresh air introduced into the building, replacing the current building exhaust system with heat recovery ventilation, and installing a heating and ventilation control system that will monitor air quality and compensate for changes in building use and environmental conditions.
- **HEAT DISTRIBUTION:** This will be improved through improved air circulation and a control system that monitors and adjusts for building use patterns and environmental conditions.
- **ENERGY EFFICIENCY:** The building energy efficiency will be addressed by decreasing air infiltration at the building shell, improvements to the attic insulation envelope, installation of heating and ventilation controls that will modulate to accommodate use patterns, and the use of energy recovery ventilation units to capture the heat from the building exhaust system.

Application Process

The grant must be applied for and awarded through the Town of Craftsbury. The process for applying for the grant includes:

- A public hearing, which will be held at 6:30 PM on October 19th at the Craftsbury Town Hall. At that meeting, the public will have an opportunity to learn more about the renovation, and the funding process.
- A vote will be taken by the Selectboard at the ending of the public hearing to determine whether the town will support the application.
- There will be a 5-day opportunity for public comment from October 20-25th.
- The grant would be submitted before the end of October. The Vermont Community Development Board will meet to consider the application on November 18th.

Town Responsibilities for Grant

This is a grant, not a loan, and the town is NOT responsible for providing these funds to the center. There is also no match requirement for this grant, so the town will not be responsible for providing any funds for this project. However, it will be the intermediary for funds through a subgrant agreement between the town and CCCC. The town will submit requisitions for work that is being done at the Center and will then transfer disbursed funds to the CCCC. The town will also need to submit progress reports through an online reporting system. With funds from the grant, a part-time consultant can be employed who will perform these services for the town. There will also be an environmental review once the grant is awarded, and costs for this review are also reimbursable through the grant agreement. Once the work is complete and all requirements of the grant are met, the grant will be closed out by the state with no further action required from the town.

Conclusion

The Covid pandemic has revealed many vulnerabilities in public health systems. One has been in the area of ventilation systems and air flow in public facilities. For senior residences, the effect has been devastating. Recognizing this, the American Rescue Plan has allocated money for precisely the dilemma of the Craftsbury Care Center; we are a small facility, but we require significant funds in order to make our facility safe for residents and staff. This funding represents a unique opportunity for us, and we hope that the town will support our efforts.

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Timeline

Date	Concept
Sept - Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preliminary Project Design development and feasibility ● Grant application ● Selection of design team (Architect and mechanical engineer)
November 2021	Notification of Award
November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Application signed and Approval to Proceed given. ● Authorizing design team to prepare bidding and construction documents.
November-December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Selection of Grant Manager to be responsible for requisitions, progress reports and other grant requirements ● Consult with Efficiency VT ● Development of engineering and architectural plans.
December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion of Environmental Review Process ● Completion of project plans and specifications
December - January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion of bidding documents ● Advertisement for construction bids
January 2021 - February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secure bids from qualified contractors for the work ● Enter contracts for the work
March – June 2022	Construction phase.
June – July 2022	Project completion

Budget Summary

General Administration	
Attorney fees for grant review	\$3500
Costs of public hearings and progress reports	\$500
Part time grants overview manager to do progress reports and requisitions, and liaison between town and CCCC	\$20,000
Total General Administration	\$24,000
Public Facility Rehabilitation	
Construction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insulation upgrade to attic • Replacing existing bathroom exhaust with heat recovery ventilation system • Replacing existing dining area and central core exhaust with heat recovery ventilation • Adding limited air conditioning and air filtration to dining area and central core. • Installing direct digital control system for HVAC system 	\$469,499
Construction Contingencies	\$40,000
Total Public Facility Rehabilitation	\$509,499
Program Management	
Architectural and engineering fees	\$38,000
Environmental Review Costs	\$2000
Davis Bacon administration	\$4000
Total Program Management	\$44,000
Budget Total	\$577,499