

2020 FRCoC Cover Letter for VHSP Funding

A separate cover sheet is required for each project application.

Applicant

Legal Name: George Washington Regional Commission

Type of Applicant (select one): Non-Profit Housing Authority PDC Unit of Local Government

EIN/TIN: 54-0715969

Address: 406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401

Application Contact

Name: Samantha Shoukas

Title: Continuum of Care Coordinator

Phone: 540-642-1578

Email: shoukas@gwregion.org

Project Name: FY21 GWRC VHSP CoC Planning Application

Project Type (select one):

- Coordinated Assessment Outreach Emergency Shelter Operations
 Rapid Re-Housing Targeted Prevention Housing Location
 CoC Planning (Only the CoC Lead Agency is eligible to apply for CoC Planning VHSP funding.)

Type of Application (select one):

- New (requesting funding for new project)
 Renewal (requesting level or reduced funding for existing project)
 Renewal with Expansion (requesting increased funding for existing project)

New Amount Request:

Renewal Amount Requested: \$50,000

Expansion Amount Requested: \$20,000

Approximate number of people this program will serve: N/A

The applicant organization's governing board discussed and/or approved this application for funding at a meeting held on _____ (date). If this application has not yet been discussed, it will be discussed at the next meeting of the governing board, which will be held on March 16, 2020 (date).

The applicant organization named above will act as the responsible fiscal agent for any funds received and will comply with applicable tax laws, regulations, and CoC policies. By signing this application, we agree that we have read and approve of the content of this application.

Board Chair:



Signature

24 Feb 2020

Date

Executive Director:



Signature

2/24/2020

Date

2020 FRCoC Application for VHSP Funding CoC Planning

Only the CoC Lead Agency is eligible to apply for CoC Planning VHSP funding.

Project Name: FY21 GWRC VHSP CoC Planning Application

Line-Item Budget

Please complete line-item budget below. Budget amounts should reflect the VHSP request only.

Note: Renewal projects can apply for renewal HMIS and Administration amounts up to the grantee's total FY20 HMIS and Administration amounts regardless of 5% and 3% caps. HMIS and Administration amounts across all of the CoC's FY21 project applications shall not exceed total allowable HMIS and Administration amounts.

Expansion projects can apply for an HMIS expansion up to the amount where the combined renewal/expansion HMIS request is 5% of the combined renewal/expansion project subtotal and an Administration expansion up to the amount where the combined renewal/expansion Administration request is 3% of the combined renewal/expansion project subtotal.

New projects can apply for an HMIS amount up to 5% of the project subtotal and an Administration amount up to 3% of the project subtotal.

	Renewal Amount	Expansion Amount
CoC Planning (up to 7% of Community Base Request)		
Salaries	\$38,000	\$16,752
Other (specify) – Training	\$1,000	
Other (specify) – Travel	\$1,000	
Other (specify) - Equipment		\$1,500
Subtotal	\$40,000	\$18,252
HMIS (up to 5% of subtotal)		
Computer Costs		
Fees and Licenses	\$10,000	
HMIS Staffing		
Training		
Other (specify)		
Administration (up to 3% of subtotal)		
Administration		\$1,748
Total	\$50,000	\$20,000

Match

Please indicate sources of match. Match must equal 25% of requested amount and must be used to meet the goals of VHSP, but does not need to be of the same VHSP Category as the request. Match must be

from local or private sources, must be received and expended within the grant year, and may not be used to meet multiple match requirements. If the project is requesting partial or full waiver of the match requirement, please explain. (See Pages 18-19 of the Virginia Homeless and Special Needs Housing Funding Guidelines 2020-2022 for full explanation of the match requirement.)

Type	Source	VHSP Category	Amount
Cash	Local Government – GWRC Dues	CoC Planning	17,500
Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Choose an item.		Choose an item.	

Narrative Responses

- 1. Provide a description that addresses the entire scope of the proposed project, and how the CoC Lead Agency will use grant funds to comply with the provisions of 24 CFR 578.7.** (Character Limit: 3,000)

The George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC) serves as Lead Agency for the Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care (CoC). Funding from this CoC Planning project will be paired with HUD CoC Program funding and local match to support GWRC’s continued staffing of the CoC. Staff activities include coordinating meetings; informing the CoC of best practices; providing technical assistance; overseeing collaborative applications; monitoring projects; preparing and submitting required data and reports; overseeing annual point-in-time (PIT) count planning and implementation; and ensuring the CoC continues to operate in compliance with the CoC’s Bylaws and the provisions of 24 CFR 578.7 (Responsibilities of the Continuum of Care).

The \$40,000 CoC Planning renewal request will continue to fund a portion of GWRC’s CoC staffing costs as well as training and travel expenses. The \$38,000 for salaries will be paired with HUD funding and local match to support the full-time (1 FTE) CoC Coordinator position (including salary, fringe, and indirect costs). The \$2,000 for training and travel will continue to be used to send CoC staff to meetings, trainings, and conferences.

The \$18,252 CoC Planning expansion request would be used to create a new half-time (.5 FTE) position. This position would replace the portion of the GWRC Deputy Director’s time dedicated to CoC activities, which is currently budgeted at 7 hours per week. The new position would ultimately expand staff capacity, as described below. The \$16,752 for salaries would be paired with HUD funding and local match (currently supporting the Deputy Director) to fund this new position (including salary, fringe, and indirect costs). The \$1,500 for equipment would be used to purchase a computer and software for this new position.

The \$1,748 Administration expansion request would cover a portion of GWRC’s indirect costs associated with this project. GWRC’s indirect costs include office space, office equipment and supplies, salaries and fringe for the Executive Director and Director of Finance and Personnel, GWRC’s annual audit, and other agency-wide overhead costs.

GWRC also serves as Lead Agency for the CoC’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), the database required by an expanding list of state and federal funders to track and report on clients served. HMIS activities include contracting for HMIS software; overseeing local HMIS

implementation and participation; providing training and troubleshooting assistance to HMIS users; and performing regular data quality monitoring and project and system performance evaluation. These responsibilities currently fall under the CoC Coordinator position. The \$10,000 HMIS renewal request will continue to subsidize the cost of the CoC's contract for HMIS software and licenses (about \$16,000 annually), reducing the cost of the fees that GWRC charges to agencies utilizing HMIS.

- 2. If renewal funding is being requested, explain how the project continues to meet a community need. If new/expansion funding is being requested, explain how the additional funds will increase system capacity and justify the community need for additional capacity. Be sure to use data to support the demonstrated need. (Character Limit: 3,000)**

GWRC's role as CoC Lead Agency ensures that the CoC complies with state and federal requirements and that providers work together as one homelessness response system, reducing duplication. GWRC's project and system oversight and technical assistance also ensures that the community stays competitive for grants, as funders increasingly base decisions on outcomes data. Each year, GWRC submits collaborative grant applications to state and federal funders on behalf of the CoC; in the last year the community was awarded a total of \$1,471,786 through these applications. GWRC also secured \$40,000 from local funders on the CoC's behalf for the Unsheltered Homelessness Initiative and Homelessness Helpline.

The CoC Planning renewal request will allow GWRC to maintain current staff capacity. Without current CoC Planning funds, GWRC would not be able to support a full-time CoC Coordinator. The CoC Planning expansion request would be paired with HUD funding and local match to replace 7 hours per week of the GWRC Deputy Director's time with 20 hours per week under a new position. The Deputy Director's activities would be shifted to the CoC Coordinator, and half of the CoC Coordinator's activities, including ongoing daily/weekly tasks, would be shifted to the new position. Overall this would allow the CoC Coordinator to spend more time on higher-level CoC work, such as compiling and analyzing data to inform decision making, seeking ways to diversify system funding, and providing deeper project and system evaluation and technical assistance. Current staff levels are able to meet the basic requirements of the CoC but are not sufficient to fully address CoC priorities vital to moving the needle on ending homelessness in the community. Elective priority items have remained on committee action plans year after year as the CoC Coordinator's time is consumed by required CoC compliance activities. The additional staff capacity would help support these priorities, as well as goals and objectives identified in the CoC's strategic plan, which is currently undergoing an update.

The regional HMIS facilitates information-sharing among homeless service providers, increasing coordination and reducing duplication of services. HMIS allows providers to better track and report on client needs, services provided, and outcomes; this data informs strategic planning and funding decisions within the CoC. As HMIS participation is required by several state and federal funders, GWRC's ongoing HMIS administration ensures providers continue to be eligible for funding. The HMIS renewal request will allow GWRC to subsidize the annual cost of HMIS. Without the subsidy, the fees passed onto agencies utilizing HMIS would be prohibitive.

The \$1,748 Administration expansion request would cover a portion of GWRC's indirect costs associated with this project, which can only be reimbursed through the administration line item and are therefore currently unable to be reimbursed through this grant.

3. Explain how the requested funds will improve the CoC's ability to evaluate the outcome of CoC and ESG projects. (Character Limit: 3,000)

The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program are both federal programs administered by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that provide funding for homeless services. Micah Ministries currently receives CoC Program funding for permanent supportive housing and Empowerhouse was recently awarded CoC Program funding for rapid re-housing for domestic violence survivors. In addition, Micah Ministries receives ESG funding as part of their VHSP rapid re-housing allocation from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

Over the past year, CoC staff has focused on updating and adopting community-wide policies and procedures (Bylaws, Coordinated Entry Policies & Procedures, Funding Policies & Procedures, and Project Performance Standards). These documents set standards for operating the CoC and homelessness response system. Additionally, the CoC's current AmeriCorps VISTA member is dedicated to developing standards for all project types (street outreach, prevention, emergency shelter, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing) and providing individual technical assistance to the CoC's homelessness response system partners. (GWRC successfully applied for a second-year VISTA to continue this work after the current VISTA's term of service ends in July 2020.) Over the last year, CoC staff worked with the Funding & Performance Committee to develop local project performance standards to evaluate the outcomes of not just CoC and ESG-funded projects, but VHSP-funded projects as well. Staff will use data from HMIS or comparable databases to monitor project outcomes and provide targeted technical assistance to individual projects. Project outcome reports will also be provided to the Funding & Performance Committee and will factor into the committee's consideration of future funding requests. In FY21, the CoC will work with the Funding & Performance Committee to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan. This plan will require ongoing project and system evaluation, more refined data quality monitoring, and technical assistance at the agency and project level.

The requested CoC Planning expansion would allow CoC staff to focus on the outcomes of CoC, ESG, and VHSP-funded projects, above the level that this is already being performed, and provide the staff capacity needed to implement the monitoring and evaluation plan. If the CoC Planning expansion request is funded, a portion of the additional staff hours would be dedicated to deeper project evaluation, monitoring, and technical assistance.

4. Provide a description of project staff capacity to include experience and training. Include a list of the applicable certificates of training for direct program staff. If any staff dedicated to the project are also dedicated to other projects, explain the breakdown of hours by project. If any portion of the funding request is to pay for a new staff position, how will the agency ensure position is filled in a timely manner? (Character Limit: 3,000)

Samantha Shoukas is the CoC Coordinator and staffs both the CoC and its HMIS implementation. Samantha has a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of Mary Washington and a Master's in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University. Prior to joining the CoC in May 2017, she worked as an Adult Protective Services Worker with Fauquier County Department of Social Services for 4 years and worked with Homeward, the Lead Agency for the Greater Richmond CoC, conducting research and facilitating lived experience input sessions. Samantha has attended

several conferences, including annual conferences hosted by the National Alliance to End Homelessness and Virginia Housing Alliance (VHA), and several trainings, including the 20-hour Excellence in Leadership course through the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and the 40-hour domestic violence training through Empowerhouse. This full-time (1 FTE) position is fully dedicated to staffing the CoC, and is supported through VHSP CoC Planning funding and match (45%), HUD CoC Program CoC Planning funding and match (5%), and HUD CoC Program HMIS funding and match (50%).

Kate Gibson is the GWRC Deputy Director and supports the CoC's efforts by providing supervision to CoC staff and assistance with grant writing and administration. If the expansion request is awarded, these activities will shift to the CoC Coordinator. Kate currently dedicates 7 hours per week to the CoC and the remainder of her hours to GWRC's economic development, environmental, and transportation demand management efforts. If the expansion is not awarded, this position will continue to support the CoC.

If the CoC Planning expansion is awarded, GWRC would replace the Deputy Director's 7 hours per week with a .5 FTE position. The job description, which includes required and preferred qualifications, is attached to this application. This position would be supported through VHSP CoC Planning funding and match (50%), HUD CoC Program CoC Planning funding and match (20%), and HUD CoC Program HMIS funding and match (30%). If the expansion is awarded, GWRC would begin recruiting and work to fill the position as quickly as possible. The position would be posted on the CoC and GWRC websites, distributed through the CoC newsletter, and sent to community partners directly. Following a wave of retirements, GWRC recently underwent the process of hiring several new staff members, and has honed this process over the last several months.

In addition to permanent staff, GWRC is currently hosting a VISTA through the VHA AmeriCorps VISTA Program, supported by funding from the Virginia Housing Development Authority. Anne Marie Kluempfen, the current VISTA, started in August 2019 and will be with the CoC for one year. Her role is to provide technical assistance to the CoC's homelessness response system partners. GWRC has been approved for a second-year VISTA to continue this work in FY21.

- 5. Provide evidence of organizational capacity to administer the requested funding and implement VHSP-funded activities, to include governance, leadership, experience, and financial management. Will project activities be ready to begin on July 1, 2020?** (Character Limit: 3,000)

GWRC has been providing regional planning services to Planning District 16 since 1961. GWRC has been the HMIS Lead Agency since 2008 and the CoC Lead Agency since 2014. GWRC administers several state and federal grants, and has administered HUD CoC Program grants since 2008 and VHSP grants since 2014. GWRC maintains consistent drawdowns and does not have any unresolved monitoring or audit findings. GWRC's Board of Commissioners, comprised of elected officials from the five local governments of Planning District 16, meets monthly to oversee operations and current initiatives. As this grant is a continuation of GWRC's current VHSP funding, activities will be ready to begin on July 1, 2020. If the expansion is awarded, GWRC stands ready to fill the new position in a timely manner.

- 6. Are there any unresolved monitoring or audit findings for any grants operated by the applicant or potential subrecipients? If yes, please explain.** (Character Limit: 1,000)

Yes No

Attachments

CoC Bylaws
HMIS Policies & Procedures
CoC-Level Policies & Procedures/Service Standards
Homelessness Response System Flow Chart
CoC Strategic Plan
CoC Certification and Assurances
Project Job Descriptions

Attachments (once per agency)

Board of Director Listing
Organizational Chart
990 (if applicable)
Profit and Loss Statement (prior year and most recent YTD)
Spending Plan (template provided, please submit in Excel format)
Organizational Certification and Assurances (template provided)