



KNOX COUNTY

TENNESSEE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
RECOVERY HOUSING PROGRAM

CDBG-RHP GRANT APPLICATION FOR SUBMISSION TO:
TN DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ASSISTED WITH TRANSITIONAL HOUSING
NUMBER OF NEW UNITS OF TRANSITIONAL HOUSING CREATED



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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Knox County is proposing a two-phase project that will provide both immediate housing assistance for people recovering from substance use issues as well as the construction of additional recovery housing units within the County. This two-phase approach will allow the County to immediately assist those in need of high-quality abstinence-focused peer-supported recovery housing programs while also partnering with an experienced non-profit organization to construct additional units to meet the increased need in the County.

DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Knox County proposes utilizing CDBG-RHP funding to meet the immediate and long-term need for access to stable and safe housing for individuals struggling with chronic substance use disorders. If approved, this project will provide critical resources to Knox County residents working to overcome substance misuse through the opportunity to live within a community that supports the physical and emotional wellbeing necessary to build a healthy and purpose-filled life. To do this, the County's proposed project will focus on two areas: the need for immediate financial assistance to individuals ready for transitional housing but who lack the resources to pay for these services, as well as the construction of an additional facility to increase the recovery housing capacity critically needed in Knox County.

To ensure the timelines and objectives of the CDBG-RHP program are met, Knox County proposes utilizing the requested funding to build on projects and relationships that have proven successful in the past. To meet the long-term need for increased recovery transitional housing facilities, the County proposes expanding an existing partnership with the McNabb Center. The County is currently providing funding to the McNabb Center for two projects relevant to the scope of this grant. First, the County is supporting the McNabb Center's efforts to increase the number of residential beds for substance misuse services at CenterPointe. While this project will not directly impact our grant application, it does illustrate the longstanding partnership between the County and the McNabb Center in finding a solution for the increasing number of overdoses happening in our community. The second project, building transitional housing for victims of domestic violence, is one where we can leverage previously approved funding to increase the number of recovery transitional housing units available in Knox County. Through community donations, local tax dollars, and Knox County's CDBG funding, McNabb Center has raised over \$4.2 million dollars to construct a new 12-unit transitional housing facility for victims of domestic violence. Utilizing the available acreage from this ten-acre property provides a unique opportunity to expand the availability of recovery transitional housing through partnership with



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an experienced nonprofit agency at a significantly reduced cost. We estimate the total cost to construct and furnish a 2,500 square foot facility with beds for 8 individuals at \$950,000 and propose utilizing \$500,000 in CDBG-RHP funding with the remaining \$450,000 to be raised by our partners at McNabb Center.

While there is no doubt that increasing the number of units of recovery transitional housing available in the County will have a long-term impact on our community, we are also proposing to build on another Knox County program to provide immediate rent and utility assistance to those lacking the financial means to access the services currently positively impacting our county. Since March of 2020, the County has been administering the U.S. Department of the Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Program which has assisted over 6,000 households with \$22 million dollars in rent and utility assistance payments through the current date.

Unfortunately, the rules set out by the Treasury for this program prohibit us from assisting renters without a lease, and since most transitional recovery housing programs utilize occupancy agreements, we are not able to assist many of the individuals that require financial assistance to afford to live in quality transitional recovery housing. The County is proposing utilizing what we have learned through this successful program to build a similar program with CDBG-RHP funds to help all individuals in recovery from a substance use disorder access safe and stable transitional recovery housing through the payment of \$250,000 in lease, rent, and/or utility payments directly to providers.

PROJECT NEED

NARRATIVE OF NEED

Per the Knox County Regional Forensic Center's *2020 Drug-Related Death Report*, Knox County saw a 41% increase in drug-related deaths from 2019 to 2020, and based on preliminary data for 2021, the percentage change from 2020 to 2021 is expected to be even higher. In 2020, Knox County had the 8th highest rate of fatal overdoses in the State with 71 per 100,000 residents.

Knox County is committed to creating opportunities for every resident to thrive in an engaged and vibrant community and increasing access to housing and recovery programs for individuals struggling with substance use disorders is part of keeping that commitment. The County is currently funding a variety of programs focused on substance use disorders through over \$2.5 million dollars in local and federal funds allocated to nonprofit agencies. Funding requested under the CDBG-RHP program will allow the County to expand these efforts and increase our capacity to address the issue.



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COUNTY-SPECIFIC DATA

Knox County 2020 Census Population – 478,971 residents

Knox County Fatal Overdoses per 100,000 residents – 71 (2020)

Knox County Nonfatal Overdoses per 100,000 residents – 350 (2019)

Knox County Poverty Rate – 14.5%

PROJECT IMPACT

PROJECT READINESS

Phase One – Rent/Utility Assistance – The first phase of the County’s proposed project would begin immediately upon approval of the grant application. Knox County already has a software portal in place that can be utilized to process rent and utility applications, along with personnel trained in managing this type of program.

Phase Two – Transitional Recovery Housing Construction – Upon approval of the grant, the McNabb Center would immediately begin a funding campaign to raise their share of the cost for the second phase of the County’s proposed project. Because the land has already been purchased, and the environmental review process completed, construction would begin immediately upon the close of the capital campaign. Eligible site preparation and infrastructure costs could be charged against the grant within six months of the project start date.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Our country is experiencing an epidemic of fatal and nonfatal drug overdoses and the impact of the epidemic has been felt by most every family. In Knox County, as in the rest of the country, there is now overwhelming support for finding a way to help individuals struggling with substance misuse disorders. All4Knox, a joint City of Knoxville / Knox County initiative, was created with a vision to decrease the impact of substance misuse in Knox County via the development of community-level change through a coordinated response. Working with public and private organizations focused on evidence-based treatment and support, the City and County are committed to working to find a solution.

SUPPORTIVE PROGRAMS

There are multiple organizations providing evidence-based substance use disorder support and recovery services across Knox County. The County is currently funding a variety of programs focused on substance use disorders through over \$2.5 million dollars in local and federal funds



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allocated to nonprofit agencies. The McNabb Center offers a full continuum of substance use treatment services from intensive outpatient to residential care. Each outpatient program provides 9-12 hours per week of structured therapy and education and provides assistance in the areas of recovery and peer support.

PROJECT FEASIBILITY

PROJECT TIMELINE

All CDBG-RHP grant required timelines and expenditures, including the 30% spenddown by February 20, 2023, will be met through Knox County's proposed projects.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Operational costs for transitional recovery housing are typically paid by the residents living in the facility. The McNabb Center will use an operational-cost model similar to their current model in Hamblen County for the units proposed in Knox County's CDBG-RHP application. However, Knox County is committed to continuing to support recovery programs and transitional housing through future local and federal grant funding.

EXPERIENCE AND CAPACITY

PARTNER AGENCY

The McNabb Center provides support to over 36,000 people throughout East Tennessee each year and is the region's leading nonprofit provider of mental health, substance misuse, social, and victim services. Additionally, the McNabb Center has already successfully completed a project similar to the one proposed in this application. The McNabb Center Recovery Home in Hamblen County is a 12-step, abstinence-based recovery program providing transitional recovery housing that includes staff led groups focused on life skills, employment placement, relapse prevention, and planning for independence.

GRANT MANAGEMENT

The CDBG-RHP grant will be primarily administered by Knox County Grants and Community Development along with the accounting assistance of Knox County Finance personnel. These departments both have substantial experience managing a variety of federally funded programs provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Department of Housing and



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Urban Development, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and U.S. Department of the Treasury.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ASSISTED WITH TRANSITIONAL HOUSING – 50 INDIVIDUALS

NUMBER OF NEW UNITS OF TRANSITIONAL HOUSING CREATED – 8 UNITS



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