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## Housing Authority of the City of Danbury

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C. MARIA MOFFETT, RESIDENT COMMISSIONER

M. CAROLYN SISTRUNK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 22, 2005

Honorable Mark D. Boughton  
Mayor, City of Danbury  
155 Deerhill Avenue  
Danbury, Connecticut 06810

### RE: REQUEST FOR FUNDING - DREAM HOMES COMMUNITY CENTER

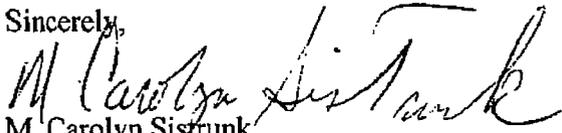
Dear Mayor Boughton:

On behalf of the partners collaborating to prevent homelessness and provide affordable housing options to the citizens of Danbury, I respectfully requests an annual grant in the amount of fifty four thousand five hundred dollars (\$54,500) from the City of Danbury in support of Dream Homes Community Center (DHCC) beginning January, 2006.

The DHCC project costs incorporate an affordable rental and homeownership program with the administration of the "point of entry" component of the City of Danbury's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. For your consideration and use, please find attached the Dream Homes Community Center projected costs and the proposed Point of Entry Memorandum of Agreement.

Upon your review, I'll be happy to address any questions and concerns you may have. I may be contacted at (203) 743-8822.

Sincerely,

  
M. Carolyn Sistrunk  
Executive Director

**PROPOSAL TO**  
**MAYOR MARK BOUGHTON**  
**FOR**  
**DREAM HOMES COMMUNITY**  
**CENTER**



# **DREAM HOMES COMMUNITY CENTER**

## **MISSION**

Dream Homes Community Center (DHCC) will act as a point of entry for individuals, directing them to appropriate community housing and related resources, to prevent homelessness and help people secure housing within their financial means.

DHCC is a collaborative project, combining the effective and longstanding experience of three local Agencies with the City of Danbury and its 10 Year Plan to end Homelessness. The three local Agencies are Housing Authority of the City of Danbury (HACD)<sup>1</sup>, the Association of Religious Communities (ARC)<sup>2</sup>, and Western Connecticut Association for Human Rights (WeCAHR)<sup>3</sup>. With over 60 years combined experience, this collaborative has an extensive and respected network of partners in the local community.

## **TARGET POPULATION**

Dream Homes Community Center targets groups who traditionally have been underserved by the mortgage industry, such as: low- and moderate-income buyers, female heads of households, people of color, and people with disabilities.

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<sup>1</sup> **Housing Authority of the City of Danbury (HACD)** - Incorporated in 1948, with the mission of providing safe, decent and affordable housing. In greater Danbury, HACD currently owns and manages 1,535 housing units. HACD also administers a regional Section 8 program for low and moderate-income individuals and families. Over the last 15 years, HACD embarked upon an ambitious home acquisition program. Through this innovative approach, HACD transitions from the dense multifamily housing complex to individual family homes indistinguishable from the surrounding neighbor.

<sup>2</sup> **Association of Religious Communities (ARC)** - is a point of entry and support center for people navigating their way through various life transitions, often including housing. ARC makes over 1,000 referrals each year. ARC has a partnership of nearly 30 years with HACD and has worked with many stakeholders to pioneer joint efforts in the community, including: The City Housing Partnership, the UWNFC Key-Rings Security Deposit Housing Collaborative, the Interfaith Commission on Homelessness, and the UWNFC Housing Opportunities Team. In October 2004, ARC shared the Community Spirit Award presented by Housing Solutions of greater Danbury.

<sup>3</sup> **Western Connecticut Association for Human Rights (WeCAHR)** - Created by parents and professionals who recognized the need for an independent group to ensure children and adults receive the services they need. The mission promotes and encourages interests and rights of children and adults with disabilities through advocacy, information, referral and support. Advocates assist individuals to obtain in home support and to assure stability and independence. WeCAHR helps individuals leave group settings to obtain greater independence and to contribute to the community. Long-term relations are in place with community partners, such as: Savings Bank of Danbury, Non-profit Housing Development Corporation, HACD and the Corporation for Independent Living.

Information and data gathered through DHCC will be shared with the collaborative's network of partners including but not limited to: banking institutions, housing advocates, community and nonprofit organizations, federal, state and city governments, developers, employers and funders.

In addition to establishing a point of entry for affordable housing, DHCC in collaboration with the City of Danbury, will serve as the Point of Entry for all persons seeking services because they are homeless, at risk of homelessness or previously homeless and recently housed. As a major component of the City of Danbury's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, DHCC will establish itself in a manner that will result in an effective central location for services, information, referral, problem solving and collaboration. The point of entry is not expected to provide direct services once data is gathered and needs are determined. Referrals will be made to existing agencies/programs where they will continue to work with people as they do now. These agencies will refer newly identified persons who are about to become homeless or who are homeless to the point of entry so that data can be gathered and other referrals made if necessary.

## **COMMUNITY NEED**

Our area is rich in services related to housing. However, there are four significant gaps and these will be filled by DHCC:

- The need for a centralized point of entry for consumers
- The need to cultivate linkages between all stakeholders
- The need for counseling and financial assistance to low and moderate income populations
- The need to prevent homelessness with measures precluding eviction or foreclosure

## **SERVICES**

To meet the above stated community need, DHCC will provide nine essential services:

1. Centralization and Linkages – By collecting, sharing and maintaining a database of community programs and resources that provide housing services
2. Public education -- through the formation of a DHCC website, identifying program mission, goals, criteria, and areas of service
3. Rental and Homeownership counseling -- to help people secure decent, affordable, safe, sanitary and legal housing in the greater Danbury seven-town region
4. Pre-purchase counseling -- for families who want to buy their first home
5. Down payment and closing cost assistance – for qualified first time homebuyers
6. Budget, credit and mortgage default counseling -- for Renters and Homeowners

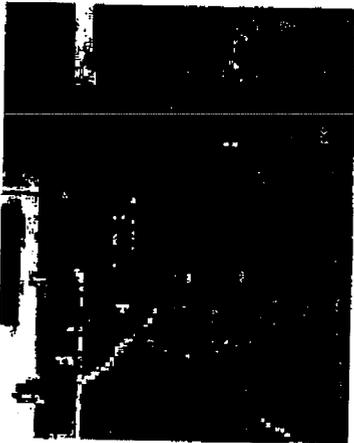
7. Homeless prevention -- financial assistance to avoid eviction or foreclosure for people in crisis
8. Home equity conversion mortgage counseling -- to help elderly homeowners who need cash for repairs or medical expenses
9. Mediation and related assistance -- to resolve landlord/tenant disputes and education in the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords

**DHCC OUTCOMES:**

- Provide centralized intake and referral
- Record, evaluate, assess and report on data from all intakes and referrals
- Provide counseling to an estimated 75, 125 and 175 consumers in years 1, 2, and 3, respectively
- Prevent homelessness by providing new housing each year, as follows:
  - 20% new homeownership for Section 8 consumers
  - 10% new homeownership for people with disabilities
  - 30% new homeownership for female heads of households, people of color, and people with little or poor credit history
  - 40% obtain new rentals

The demand for the DHCC is high and will remain high over the next three years due to current and forecasted trends which specifically impact the low- and moderate-income population, who can only attain housing if given the opportunity to access assistance for homeownership and rental counseling free of charge.

# **DREAM HOMES COMMUNITY CENTER**



**ATTACHMENT ONE.**

POSITION	GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES	HOMELESSNESS-TASK FORCE SPECIFIC	PROJECT COSTS	PROPOSED SOURCE OF FUNDING CITY/NONCITY
PROGRAM DIRECTOR	<p>Manage the operations of Dreams Homes Recruit hire staff available to complete intake forms/applications for services and Responsibility will include</p> <p><u>Centralization and Linkages</u> – By collecting, sharing and maintaining a <u>database</u> of community programs and resources that provide housing services</p> <p><u>Rental and Homeownership Intake and Referral</u> -- to assist people secure decent, affordable, safe, sanitary and legal housing in the greater Danbury seven-town region</p> <p><u>Public education</u> -- through the formation of a <u>DHCC website</u>, identifying program mission, goals, criteria, and areas of service</p> <p><u>Mediation and related assistance</u> – to resolve landlord/tenant disputes and provide education in the rights and responsibilities.</p> <p><u>Pre-purchase counseling Homeownership</u> -- for families who want to buy their first home</p> <p><u>Down payment and closing cost assistance</u> – for qualified first time homebuyers</p> <p><u>Budget, credit and mortgage default counseling</u> -- for Renters and Homeowners</p> <p><u>Homelessness Prevention</u> -- administer financial assistance</p>	<p>Recruit hire staff necessary to implement the point of entry component of the City of Danbury's 10 Year Plan to end Homelessness.</p> <p>Develop, administer and manage a centralized intake and application process for services and manage the collection and reporting of such information into the Homeless Information Management System;</p> <p>Develop, implement and maintain a general affordable housing and related services <u>database</u> that will include homeless and homeless prevention resources</p> <p>Manage intake and referrals for client seeking affordable rental and/or homeownership.</p> <p>Will act as a clearing house for the coordination and dissemination of all housing information and housing services for homeless persons by gathering and cataloging such information and maintaining the quality of the data with regularly scheduled updates;</p> <p>Work with the Continuum of Care to create the opportunity for dialogue with state and local institutions and facilities about mutual challenges and develop strategies and community protocols for persons being discharged from correctional facilities, hospitals and treatment programs.</p> <p>Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with all local and area Social Service agencies; faith based agencies which included houses of worship and their programs, such as Jericho Project, parish nurses, and outreach programs; landlords and discharging institutions and the Continuum of Care.</p>	<p>\$ 49,690.00 (Prorated between City of Danbury and the Dream Homes Collaborative)</p>	<p>\$35, 000 CITY OF DANBURY</p>

POSITION	GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES	HOMELESSNESS-TASK FORCE SPECIFIC	PROJECT COSTS	PROPOSED SOURCE OF FUNDING CITY/NONCITY
<b>HOMELESS COORDINATOR</b>	DHCC Intake staff person available, during all normal weekly working hours, at least to all persons, families, youth etc. that are homeless. Intake will include walk-ins or referrals be area shelters, hospitals, community programs, citizens, business and all other community based agencies.	<p>Intake and referral for persons and families that are homeless or near homeless on walk-in or referral basis.</p> <p>Complete intake forms/applications for services and enter such information into the Homeless Information Management System;</p> <p>Maintain a general affordable housing and related services <u>database</u> that will include homeless and homeless prevention resources</p> <p>Provide on-going information to landlords about services and support that could be available if they were to rent to section 8 voucher holders or to homeless persons connected to case management services by having such information available at the Point of Entry and via the internet</p> <p>Gather and catalog HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION information and maintain the quality of the data with regularly scheduled updates;</p>	<p>\$19,500.00</p> <p>25 hours @weekly. (15 @ hour)</p>	19,500 CITY OF DANBUR
<b>DREAM HOMES OFFICE COORDINATOR</b>	Office Administration including support to DHCC Program Director and Homeless Coordinator and ARC Executive Director.	<p>Projected intake of 40 calls @ week for DHCC.</p> <p>General office support including office and equipment inventory.</p>	\$5,000	NON CITY

POSITION	GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES	HOMELESSNESS-TASK FORCE SPECIFIC	PROJECT COSTS	PROPOSED SOURCE OF FUNDING CITY/NONCITY
WeCAHR	Collaborative partner -DHCC DHCC Leadership Interagency Collaboration Fundraising, DHCC Advisory Council	Housing Advocacy for Peoples with Disabilities Advocacy and support services, Case management, respond to additional need for services with appropriate referrals, outreach, data collection and reporting.  Projected 7 Hours @ week	\$,7500.00	NON CITY
PEOPLE FIRST	Statewide Homeownership Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities	DHCC Point of Entry Policy and Procedure Development Interagency Collaboration Fundraising, DHCC Advisory Council DHCC Leadership Team	\$2,500.00	NON CITY
ARC	Fiduciary DHCC Start-up Staff Supervision	DHCC Start-up and Administrative Overview DHCC Staff Supervision and Program Administration DHCC Point of Entry Policy and Procedure Development DHCC Advisory Council DHCC Leadership Team	\$12,000.00	NON CITY

# **ATTACHMENT TWO**

## **DREAM HOMES COMMUNITY CENTER**

### **POINT OF ENTRY AGREEMENT**

**Version 2**

**December 27, 2005**

The City of Danbury's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness states that Identifying, expanding and improving necessary services will occur when there is an entity responsible for making sure it occurs. Improving data collection and analysis is most likely to occur when there is a central location for the data to be collected. People in need of housing and related services will receive appropriate referrals and follow up services when someone is coordinating those efforts. The plan therefore recommends that Point of Entry be established for all persons seeking services because they are homeless, at risk of homelessness or previously homeless and recently housed.

The agency identified as The Point of Entry must establish itself in a manner that will result in an effective central location for services, information, referral, problem solving and collaboration. The point of entry is not expected to provide direct services once data is gathered and needs are determined. Referrals will be made to existing agencies/programs where they will continue to work with people as they do now. These agencies will refer newly identified persons who are about to become homeless or who are homeless to the point of entry so that data can be gathered and other referrals made if necessary.

Based on the needs identified and results desired, the community will expect that the point of entry:

1. Will establish and maintain collaborative relationships with local and area Social Service agencies; faith based agencies which included houses of worship and their programs, such as Jericho Project, parish nurses, and outreach programs; landlords and discharging institutions and the Continuum of Care.
2. Will develop a streamlined application and referral process collaboratively with agencies providing services to the homeless, for use community-wide;
3. Will develop follow-up procedures and policies collaboratively with community agencies;
4. Will act as a clearing house for the coordination and dissemination of housing information and housing services for homeless persons by gathering and cataloging such information and maintaining the quality of the data with regularly scheduled updates;
5. Will have intake staff available, during normal weekly working hours, at least to persons, families, youth etc. that are homeless. Such persons will be able to walk-in or be referred by area shelters, hospitals, community programs, citizens, business and other community based agencies.
6. Will have staff available to complete intake forms/applications for services and enter such information into the Homeless Information Management System;
7. Will make the appropriate referrals to meet the identified needs;

8. Will adhere to established follow up policies and procedures to insure that agencies are willing and able to meet the needs of the persons referred;
9. Will seek to establish a community wide system of information sharing amongst providers that allows the providers to know which agencies are providing case management and for whom (i.e. a service system access card);
10. Will provide on-going information to landlords about services available to their tenants facing any number of difficulties by having such information at the Point-of Entry and via the internet;
11. Will provide on-going information to landlords about services and supports that could be available if they were to rent to section 8 voucher holders or to homeless persons connected to case management services by having such information available at the Point of Entry and via the internet;
12. Will work with the Continuum to create the opportunity for dialogue with state and local institutions and facilities about mutual challenges and develop strategies and community protocols for persons being discharged from correctional facilities, hospitals and treatment programs.
13. Will be expected to identify gaps in services, to be able to report on numbers, needs and any barriers to services;
14. Will be expected to report regularly to the Municipal Agency, Authority or Commission charged with implementation of the 10 year plan, and provide information as needed to the Continuum of Care, the CDBG process and other municipal departments.

In support of the 10 year plan, The City of Danbury is willing to commit \$ 54,500.00  
These funds will be allocated annually to Dream Homes Community Center as the Point  
of Entry.

The signatures below represent an agreement on both sides of the commitment and the  
expectations regarding the Point of Entry component of the City of Danbury's 10 Year  
Plan to End Homelessness.

**DREAM HOMES COLLABORATIVE:**

**CITY OF DANBURY:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Association of Religious Communities

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Housing Authority of the City of Danbury

\_\_\_\_\_  
Western Connecticut Association of Human Rights