

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	May 20, 2024
Action Required:	Approval of Homeowner Assistance Grant Program
Presenter:	Todd Divers, Commissioner of the Revenue
Staff Contacts:	Sue Moffett, Director of Social Services
Title:	Resolution appropriating a grant of public funds for housing assistance to low- and moderate-income homeowners within the City of Charlottesville - \$1,295,000 (2nd reading)

Background

Attached is an appropriation resolution for Council's consideration, to provide a public grant to the City's local board of social services, to assist needy persons with ongoing costs of home ownership.

Discussion

For some time, City Council has sought to assist low- and moderate-income persons whose ownership of a home may be in jeopardy due to financial distress associated with the costs of homeownership. In the face of a continuing affordable housing crisis, there are a significant number of persons whose status as homeowners is tenuous due to the rising costs of transportation, utility and food, and other circumstances that result in the costs of homeownership exceeding reasonable portions of a family's income.

Pursuant to the provisions of Va. Code § 63.2-314, the City Council may make a grant of public funds to the City's Director of Social Services, in her capacity as the "local board", for the purpose of aiding needy persons within the City. Eligibility of homeowners to receive disbursements from this grant fund need not be limited to the requirements for any state public assistance programs, or any Virginia Housing program. Upon City Council's appropriation of funds to the Director of DSS, the public funds would be deposited in the local treasury to the credit of the local board. The Director of DSS, in her capacity as the "local board", will be responsible for dispensing the funds in accordance with specific eligibility requirements. The Director will utilize existing staff in the Commissioner of Revenue's office, to assist with processing of applications and determinations of eligibility, using a cooperative agreement.

For 2024, the following income parameters are proposed, with relief calculated as flat amounts:

2024 CHAP - (Public Grant for Housing Assistance)				
2024 Grantee Household Income Limits	\$0 - \$36,990	\$36,991 - \$49,320	\$49,321 - \$55,485	\$55,486 - \$61,650

Grant	\$2,500	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$1,000
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Proposed Eligibility Criteria for this Public Grant:

1. Grantee must be an individual. No applications will be accepted from any company, corporation, partnership, or other form of legal entity (other than a trust, as referenced below) or awarded to any legal entity.
2. Grantee must be the owner of a home within the City. "Ownership" may be any of the following: (i) individually, or in conjunction with a spouse holding life rights, (ii) individually, or in conjunction with a spouse holding the power of revocation in a revocable inter vivos trust of which the home is an asset, or (iii) alone or in conjunction with a spouse who possesses a life estate, or an estate for joint lives, or a continuing right of use or support under the terms of an irrevocable trust of which the property is an asset.
3. Grantee must reside within the home.
4. The most recent assessed value of the home cannot exceed \$485,000 (this is the average assessed value in 2024 of taxable residential parcels, rounded to the nearest five thousand dollars).
5. Grantee, grantee's spouse, or any other owner residing in the home cannot own any other interest in real estate, within the City or at any other location. This includes any real estate interest as (i) an individual, (ii) the beneficiary of a trust, (iii) a member of an LLC, or (iv) by virtue of any other interest in a trust or legal entity.
6. Grantee must demonstrate evidence of household income within the limits established for calendar year 2024.

Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan

This aligns with the City Council's Strategic Outcome Areas of HOUSING, ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, and ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE.

Charlottesville defines access to livable housing as a human right and works to ensure housing choices and mobility are provided for all who seek it through implementation of the Affordable Housing Plan.

Charlottesville develops strategies and economic development opportunities that drive economic prosperity for all.

Charlottesville's well-trained and dedicated staff deliver excellent services to the community.

Community Engagement

NA

Budgetary Impact

The cost of this program is funded with the annual budget appropriation for Fiscal Year 2025 approved by Council.

Recommendation

Approval. *Suggested Motion: “I move to approve the RESOLUTION appropriating a grant of public funds for housing assistance to low- and moderate-income homeowners within the City of Charlottesville.”*

Alternatives

Reject the resolution, and allow the program to lapse.

Attachments

1. 2024 Real Estate Assessment memo
2. FY25 CHAP Resolution