



Giving Back. Moving Forward.

Housing Solutions Grantmaking Purpose and Process

Revised 3/6/2023

The mission of the Charlevoix County Community Foundation (C3F) is to enhance the quality of life for all citizens of Charlevoix County, now and for generations to come. The Community Foundation helps people make a difference close to home by accepting contributions of all sizes. Each year, the Community Foundation makes grants to organizations, schools, and municipalities to make positive change in Charlevoix County.

What is the purpose of Housing Solutions Grantmaking?

The purpose of the Housing Solutions Fund is to increase the supply of housing units in Charlevoix County across a variety of price points. The Fund works to achieve this purpose by being committed to mixed-income neighborhoods and developments, increasing housing choice, and ensuring that development is compatible with local goals and objectives.

Eligible applicants include:

- 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organizations
- All units of government
- All educational institutions (preschool through college)
- Organizations described above that serve Charlevoix County residents
- Organizations that do not discriminate in hiring of staff or the provision of services

Eligible organizations must be current with follow up reports for all previous grant awards from C3F and be in good standing with the IRS.

When is the application deadline?

The Housing Solutions Fund has a rolling deadline, so applications are accepted throughout the year. The application is available at www.c3f.org. Applicants must discuss their proposal with a C3F staff member before starting an application.

What kinds of projects or programs are most likely to receive grant funding?

The Housing Solutions Fund focuses resources on removing barriers to projects at the pre-development stage and by partnering with others to leverage resources to address those barriers. The ultimate goal of preferred projects will be to increase the supply of housing units across a variety of price points.

Eligible projects:

- Will benefit people who will be year round residential occupants
- Will maintain affordability beyond the first applicant on some or all housing units
- May support pre-development activities
- May support capacity building efforts for housing organizations

Pre-development expenses include but are not limited to:

- Land acquisition
- Project consultants
- Feasibility studies
- Preliminary financial analyses/*pro formas*
- Legal fees
- Architectural designs, drawings, and site plans
- Engineering fees
- Environmental and soil testing
- Site preparation
- Appraisals
- Financial application preparation and fees
- Zoning and rezoning requests
- Title searches
- Market studies
- Analysis of infrastructure availability
- Insurance fees
- Marketing expenses

Housing Solutions grant applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the overall project meets the following criteria:

- Benefits households earning up to 120% of AMI
- Meets local goals and objectives
- Is accessible for residents who are differently abled
- Offers a location that is close to community resources and amenities
- Will strengthen the organization and/or the community the organization serves
- Is well-planned and addresses the need identified, including the comprehensiveness of the application
- Is realistic given the capacity (leadership, staffing, planning, etc.), and solvency of the organization

What kinds of grants are generally not funded?

The Community Foundation's grant cycles generally do not fund annual fundraising campaigns, political campaigns, deficit spending, sectarian projects, or services normally supported by tax dollars.

All grant applications require a cash contribution. How much is necessary?

It depends on the topic and scope of the project, but the expectation is that nonprofit partners will contribute to the budget of the project or program.

What size grants are available in the Housing Solutions Cycle?

This cycle encourages grants up to \$25,000. The request size should reflect the organization's need. Community Foundation staff can provide additional guidance and information, if needed.

How does the Community Foundation make grant decisions for the Housing Solutions Cycle?

Using the eligibility and selection criteria, 2-3 knowledgeable housing advocates will review and comment on the applications for the Community Foundation's review and decision-making. Based on this review, Community Foundation staff will recommend funding to the Board of Trustees. The Community Foundation may also share these opportunities with donor advisors, who may choose to make grant recommendations from their funds.

When will grant funding decisions be announced?

Community Foundation staff will notify grant applicants within a month of application.

What kind of follow up reporting is required?

The grant period is one year, though extensions may be offered if necessary. A follow up report is available through the online grant portal to share about the successes of the program or project as well as the lessons learned. Providing photos is encouraged. Funded organizations will receive a reminder from administrator@grantinterface.com two weeks before the follow up report is due, then again one day prior to the due date, and once more if the report has not been submitted by the deadline. If the program or project is delayed or cannot be completed within the time period, the organization's representative should call the Community Foundation.

Are there any other requirements?

- The governing board of the organization is responsible for appropriate use of funds and project implementation.
- Applicants must be current with follow up reports for all previous grants in order to apply.
- Proposals from faith-based organizations must address community needs and
 - Have a clearly demonstrated public benefit
 - Be fully accessible to all people regardless of religious beliefs and lifestyle choices
 - May NOT proselytize, (i.e. require anything in return for services provided. Examples: attending services or prayer groups and/or volunteering, etc.)

How to Apply for a Housing Solutions Grant

Step 1: Contact Ashley Cousens to discuss your eligibility. If your organization's need is a good fit for the Housing Solutions Cycle, you will receive an access code for the online grant application. Email acousens@c3f.org to get started.

Step 2: Visit www.c3f.org to log on to the online grant application (“Accepting Applications” link for the Housing Solutions Grant Cycle).

- If you have an account already, you may log on and proceed to the application using your access code.
- If you do not already have an account, you will need to create one (each user needs their own username (email address) and password) before proceeding to the application using your access code. The user who starts the application has editing rights for the application going forward. This person can invite others to contribute to the application once started.

Step 3: Complete the online grant application. You may save your work and return at any point prior to submitting your application. The application can be shared with others who may be sharing the responsibility of writing the grant proposal and completing the application. To utilize this feature, click on “collaborate” at the top of the application and enter the email address of the person needing access. Contact Ashley Cousens if you need help troubleshooting this feature. Once you submit your application, you will receive immediate confirmation via email. You may be contacted with further clarification questions regarding your application and/or eligibility.

Step 4: The Community Foundation may share your applications with donor advisors to encourage grant support.

If Funded...

The Community Foundation will share news of the grant decisions by phone after the C3F Board of Trustees approves the recommendation. Applicant organizations will also receive an emailed letter detailing the funding decision.

Receive the grant check. The grant check will be mailed to your organization following the notification phone call from C3F staff. Usually, checks are mailed out within 2 weeks of the decision.

A follow up report is required when the project is complete and within one year of the grant award. If the project is completed early, the follow up report should be submitted sooner.