

**Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) 2018 Biddle Housing Opportunities Center (BHOC) RFP
Questions and Answers**

- 1. What is the average number of meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) served daily?**
 - a. The following figures are the daily average of meals served BHOC from August 22, 2016 to May 31, 2018.
 - i. Breakfast: 102
 - ii. Lunch: 90
 - iii. Dinner: 110

- 2. Clarification about the memorandum of understanding (MOU) as opposed to a leverage letter with for example Affinia and what services they'd provide and what that amount is equal to?**
 - a. It depends on the level of collaboration and partnership will be with Affinia. If Affinia will be in the facility for particular days during the week providing services, then it's best to have a MOU as it relates to what portion of the building would be set aside for them to utilize to provide services when they come, what is the expectations you have of them, and what expectations they would have of you as the provider.

- 3. What is the turnaround time for receiving reimbursement?**
 - a. The regulations state that the City of St. Louis must reimburse any sub-recipient within thirty (30) days upon the receipt of a complete and accurate monthly billing. We believe we will be able to reimburse sub-recipients under that regulatory guideline.

- 4. Clarification on issuing bed assignments because currently, central intake does it now, so that would be a part of this proposal?**
 - a. Issuing bed assignments have always been the main priority of the actual respondent even though there is a collaboration with the CoC's housing helpline where referrals can be made to open beds, but when individuals show up at the facility after the referral is made, then the respondent must make those bed assignments.

- 5. Will an MOU be needed from the City for the services that the City provides like IDs, birth certificates, and monthly bus passes?**
 - a. The City does have limited resources where they can provide assistance towards the acquisition of IDs and birth certificates, but that is based on the availability of funding. That service is open to the entire St. Louis community.
 - b. It is ok to get a letter of support, but we are more interested in what the collaboration plan is with partners. With Biddle House we want to know how do we connect people to housing and support services, so they can move on from the shelter into their own home and on with their lives, and that's the concentration of the CoC, and nationally of HUD.

6. Is there an element of the operation that is conducted on a volunteer basis, for example, meal preparation, meal service, or other volunteer activity is there to manage or to take advantage of?

- a. It will be based on the respondent, and their linkage to volunteers to work with their organization. Volunteers will be something the respondent will constantly be reaching out, creating volunteer opportunities within the facility itself, but then managing and supervising those volunteers that come in to provide appropriate services within the facility itself. It will be up to the respondent to determine volunteer usage in the facility.

7. Is there a volunteer structure in place the respondent can take advantage of, build on, engage in, and make efforts to continue with those engagements or processes that are already in place?

- a. There could be an opportunity once a respondent is selected and awarded the grant opportunity. There will be a transition plan with the current provider, and that will be a great opportunity to have those discussions about whether or not if there are already volunteers committed to working within the facility right now currently and whether or not they might be willing to continue to offer those volunteer services during the transition, and the appointment of a new provider.

8. Biddle House has been operated as a 24-hour facility since it opened, but there was nothing in the RFP that required that. So, will proposals for less than 24-hours be accepted?

- a. It's still up under consideration that the Biddle House will be a 24-hour facility. As far as programming, there's an overnight component where participants are asleep at night, and the building is designed with a floor plan that will allow for a variety of different services that can be offered during the day. We're really looking for the respondent's creativity to take advantage of what the building has to offer. It has a large multi-purpose dining room, meeting rooms, staff rooms. So, how can we use the facility during the day to better engage those who are in the shelter as far as bringing programming activities in, linking people to resources, and ultimately to housing?
- b. **So, if the only way we can afford to do the program within the funding offered here is to do less than 24-hours a day, then we shouldn't submit a proposal?**
 - i. No, still submit a proposal. It would depend on how you're going to set out a program. The emphasis is how do you connect people to housing and support services. If you have a different idea how to run it than 24/7, then develop that into what your program is designed to be within those constraints and how you're connecting people to housing and support services.

9. Are there any admin costs available with the ESG funding and what percentage that might be?

- a. Many administrative costs with ESG funding can be covered under operations.

- b. **Reimbursement request preparation, accounting, and those kinds of things for administrative costs and if they are allowable with ESG funding?**
 - i. Yes

10. Is the City able to provide documentation for everything in Exhibit D it is providing, so it can be used as a match to the HUD funding?

- a. We can have a discussion and do that.

11. How will we know Affordable Housing match funding will be secure? What protections will we have for a match is those funds end up not being available?

- a. When Biddle House first opened in August 2016, with six (6) months ESG funds, and then six (6) months Affordable Housing Funds. That was a very unique way to do it, but it was discussed among the partners at that time and that's what they agreed to. It does not mean that it has to be the same agreement going forwards. Any respondent is welcome to apply for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF). They should have their own discussions on how funding can be allocated. AHTF and ESG funds can be spent at the exact same time if the funding is available and wouldn't have to wait the six (6) months in order to spend down the AHTF funds if you're awarded.
- b. There is from the City comparable match being the building, the maintenance, and that's kind of the safety net in terms of what are different ways we can coverage match dollars. The shelter has various funding streams that go into it to make it operate, and there's an opportunity to look at this not only from a City investment from the City dollars, but different ways to collaborate with private dollars.

12. What is the value of Exhibit D for a match?

- a. \$150,000

13. Can the training listed at the bottom of Exhibit A be built into the budget? Are they eligible expenses under this RFP?

- a. Any staff training that is directly involved in engaging with clients is reimbursable. If the training is necessary for them to be able to perform their jobs, then you should budget them in. There are some training offered free in the community, so be aware of those as well as the ones that require a cost.

14. Will the current computers at Biddle House still be there or should we budget for computers in the proposal?

- a. Computers should be budgeted in the proposal because the computers currently there belong to the current provider.

15. How do we address the variable with weather overflow about days?

- a. Look at what it takes for your staff to be able to man a 101 individuals in your overnight shelter, and all the resources it takes to supply their needs overnight. Then if you're in weather advisory and had to go to full capacity of 184, then what would

be the staffing you would need on those days and begin to figure out what the costs what would be.

b. We know the costs, but how do we decide the days?

- i. We can take the costs for one day and multiply them against how many days we project for year to year on average and how that would reflect in the budget.
- ii. Estimate days as best you can, and we understand this is difficult. We always add a buffer for weather-related emergency shelter issues with our ESG funds. There is the possibility for extra money with ESG, but if we do not then we work together to figure it out if estimated days go beyond what we have estimated. We are open to discussions with this.

c. What temperature with weather advisory would open weather overflow for Biddle House?

- i. We are going to get together with the CoC, so there is an opportunity to discuss whether it is temperature thresholds, resources, or operations with weather advisory for weather overflow. We all want to be on the same page with what the thresholds are.
- ii. For the purposes of this grant, use the current weather advisory processes in place. 25 degrees or lower with precipitation and 20 degrees or lower without precipitation.

16. What temperature for summer overflow to be activated?

- a. A weather advisory warning of temperatures exceeding 100 degrees for consecutive days is when we go into summer overflow.

17. What security is the City going to provide?

- a. We'll be providing assistance with obtaining an ID system, so those participating in the shelter will have IDs to identify themselves as they are coming into and leaving the facility. The respondent is responsible in their proposal on how they will provide staffing for the building security internally.

18. How many 911 calls a year, police reports, and when police had to come for Biddle House for disturbances or any other reasons?

- a. There were 294 calls for police to Biddle House in 2017 for a variety of concerns. They were not all necessarily within the facility but they were coded to that address - I would imagine many of them were linked to the address but not necessarily within the facility.

19. Can you provide the contact for the police partnership? Is it Officer Larry or someone else?

- a. It will probably be someone else within the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department that will be working closely with the community itself and Biddle House. We cannot say for sure that Officer Larry will always be the person.

20. How many part-time and full-time case managers and their hours?

- a. It depends on how you outline it in your response to the RFP on how those part-time and full-time case managers would be available to engage the 101 men. The main goal is linkages to housing and short stays in the shelter. Case management is normally offered during day services because this is also when mainstream resources are available. It is important that they are constantly meeting and being referred out and being linked to these resources, so their stay in the shelter is much shorter and connection to housing is quicker.
- b. It's really housing focused case management. You want to make sure your case managers are tracking everyone's progress, engaging with the CoC and coordinated entry, and as a performance measure looking for successful exits out of the shelter. The shelter should be short brief stays, and the proposal should show how we set up the program to accomplish this.

21. Is lunch to be served during day services?

- a. Potentially, but it depends on the population there because many may leave during the day. It could be as simple as a sack lunch that volunteers do. Our concentration is how we connect people to housing and services and making their stay in the emergency shelter as brief as possible.

22. Can part-time Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) entry employees be hired to do HMIS entry with ESG funds?

- a. HMIS is a regulatory requirement, so staff can be identified within operations to ensure the HMIS component is completed, and this can be made part of the budget. The agency can be reimbursed for staff that is dealing strictly with HMIS.
- b. The CoC is offering the badge program, so entry and exit should be easier. Some organizations have the barcodes pre-printed out, so all you are doing is scanning barcodes so it isn't so labor intensive.
- c. It's also looking at a broader sense on how do we groom more talent within our community. Data entry on the case management side could be done as a function of MSW interns too.
- d. **Will the badge program be provided an interface with HMIS?**
 - i. Yes.
- e. **When will the badge system be available?**
 - i. We have pricing, but probably would not roll out until a new provider is in place.

23. Can a homeless person be placed in Biddle House off the street by an outreach worker if they do not have a referral through coordinated entry?

- a. It needs to be opened up for more discussion. We're looking at various investments to help beef up our outreach processes. If someone is engaged with outreach, and they've been on the street for a really long time, then they're not going to do really

well in a shelter. They typically come into the shelter when we have really inclement weather. Outreach has to consider how we fast track to housing, and what practices can we make better. If an individual wants to go into shelter then outreach should be interfacing with our emergency shelters in terms of what that process will be. There's definitely room to collaborate on what that process will be.

24. Are the client services reimbursable? For example, if we had a program set up for clients to perform chores around the facility and we paid them with bus passes, gift cards, or something. So, is that reimbursable under ESG funding?

- a. Yes, bus passes are an eligible cost. So, if you budgeted for bus passes for use within your shelter operations, but you would use it as an incentive then bus passes is an allowable cost. You'd want to budget how many bus passes would need to be purchased.

25. How and when would we need to apply to the AHTF if we are selected for this project? What is the procedure? If we are not selected would it be possible to still apply for funds. What is the contact info?

- a. April Ford Griffin is the Executive Director of the Affordable Housing Commission. I recommend that you contact Sherrell Jacobs-Yancy, the secretary and request information regarding their procurement process.
- b. Affordable Housing Commission
Phone: (314) 657-3880
Address: 1520 Market Street; Suite 2080
Sherrell Jacobs-Yancy
Secretary II

26. Would all the security cameras and system still remain in place as they are now?

- a. Yes.