

Program Application for CPA Funds

Date of Application: **March 1, 2019**

1. Agency Name and Address:

Somerville Homeless Coalition, Inc.
PO Box 440436
Somerville, MA 02144

2. Non-profit designation (if applicable):

501 (c) (3)

3. Contact name, phone number and email address for program manager:

Michael Libby, Executive Director
(617) 623-6111 x 232
mllibby@shcinc.org

4. Name of proposed Program:

CPA PASS: Prevention-and-Stabilization-Services (PASS) Housing Program

5. Amount of request:

\$199,952 (\$170,000 rental assistance; \$29,952 management activities)—2 year period

6. If CPA, note which use category the proposed program fits (see pgs. 1-2):

- Support-to provide rental assistance for the purpose of making housing affordable.**
- Preserve supply of affordable housing in Somerville.**
- Help low-to-moderate income households gain access to or retain housing.**

7. Describe proposed activity (please attach additional pages as needed):

The Prevention and Stabilization Services (PASS) Program provides rental assistance to make housing affordable for income eligible Somerville residents and offers them supportive case management services to promote housing stability. The rental assistance is typically utilized as a two-year deep housing subsidy for each household.

In conjunction with receiving rental assistance, each participant meets with a case manager on a regular basis. During these meetings participants work on searching and applying for alternative affordable housing options in preparation for when PASS rental assistance concludes; budgeting; and, when appropriate, clients are referred to job training programs or other vocational rehabilitation services. Participants also craft an individual service plan outlining any other housing barriers and a plan to address those obstacles.

Financial support from the City of Somerville's CPA funds will allow us to provide rental assistance for two (2) years to a minimum of six (6) Somerville households (depending upon unit sizes and each household's own monthly rental contribution dollar amount) in order to make housing affordable.

8. Timeframe for performance:

September 1, 2020-August 31, 2022 (2 year grant period)

9. If it is a new program, estimated time to set up program:

This program was approved for funding for FY 2017 and FY 2018.

First contract executed: September 1, 2018-August 31, 2020 (2 years)

Note: A two-year grant agreement (combining FY 2017 and FY 2018 awards) was executed to cover the following period: September 1, 2018-August 31, 2020.

10. Describe the need within the community for the type of program proposed and note any other agencies that may be addressing it (to the extent applicant is aware) and how this program is different:

SHC's PASS program is the only program in Somerville that provides two years of rental assistance to income eligible households as a way to keep housing affordable in our community.

The Somerville Housing Authority's (SHA) state and federal family housing waitlists had been closed for years; over 10,000 households are on the SHA public housing waitlist—2,600 are Somerville residents; and, 5,500 people are on the SHA Section 8 waitlist—over 3,000 are Somerville residents. As a result, families facing displacement have very few options to secure affordable housing in the near future. This is where the PASS program is able to immediately step in, keep a family in their home and in their community, and allow that family time to explore a variety of other housing options.

11. Provide the income level of targeted beneficiary/beneficiaries:

Traditionally, the PASS program has served households within Somerville that are at or below 60% of the AMI. We anticipate that the most of households served in this project will also have incomes below 60%. However, if CPA funds are awarded this would allow SHC to serve households up to 100% AMI. The higher AMI amount would allow SHC to serve participants in the moderate income range should they apply and meet all other eligibility criteria.

12. Description of who the program will benefit (veteran population, homeless, etc. and please note the extent to which beneficiaries are Somerville residents):

The PASS program is designed to work with Somerville residents experiencing a housing crisis. These households have limited incomes and do not have the resources to maintain safe and affordable housing. The population that has most benefited from the PASS Program are those who became in danger of losing their housing due to burdensome rental increases and/or losses in income. CPA funds will allow this program to target low/moderate income households that struggle to make ends meet and feel pressure to leave Somerville. By making housing affordable with two (2) years of rental assistance, our goal is to help people living in Somerville to stay in their community where they have established critical supports for themselves and their children.

13. Estimated number of individuals or households served:

Rental Assistance, over a two year period, in the amount of \$170,000 would be used in the form of a deep subsidy and allow SHC to serve a minimum of six (6) Somerville households. Based on experience, we would expect this rental assistance to benefit approximately three (3) families and three (3) individuals. Based on these projections, the breakdown of unit size is anticipated to be three multi-bedroom units and three one-bedroom and/or efficiencies. The average (not taking into account household/unit size) annual subsidy is anticipated to be \$14,166 or \$1,180 per month per household.

14. Describe how program outcomes will be measured and tracked:

Outcomes for the PASS program are measured by our success in preventing households from falling into homelessness, moving them out of homelessness, and/or our ability to assist participants in maintaining affordable housing. We utilize the ETO (Efforts to Outcomes) HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) system, an information management database system provided through Social Solutions, to track all of our participants' progress in meeting milestones and achieving outcomes.

15. Please attach a complete program Budget and include the status of all funding source (note any funds pending or already received) and all sources and uses by amount.

Please see attached budget.

The two-year budget includes a request for \$170,000 (*approximately \$85,000 per year*) in rental assistance. The budget also includes a request for \$29,952 (*approximately \$15,000 per year*) to cover costs incurred to manage the rental assistance program over a two year period. The \$28,105 for other management activities and administration is being funded by resources within SHC.

16. Describe whether the proposed activity will be carried out with or without future funding from the Trust:

We are committed to operating the PASS program because we recognize that homeless prevention is integral in mitigating the adverse effects of the affordable housing crisis in Somerville. While SHC relies on its strong partnership with the City of Somerville and its Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) to operate PASS, the agency is continuously making efforts to locate alternative streams of funding, including utilizing Emergency

Solutions Grant (ESG) Rapid Rehousing/Prevention funds from the City of Somerville and the Commonwealth, to ensure sustainability of programs similar to PASS.

17. Experience and capacity of the agency and staff – please describe staff available to work on the project (and note if staff need to be hired) and describe any similar successful programs and how they relate to other programmatic activities:

The key staff involved in achieving the goals and outcomes set out in this proposal is our Rapid Response Case Manager, Erin Reilly.

Erin Reilly is our Rapid Response Case Manager. Erin serves as the gateway into our prevention and re-housing division and engages with households to perform an expedited intake process, quickly processing financial requests, and provides comprehensive case management services to make sure that eligible applicants are stabilized in their housing situation. Erin also offers the opportunity for participants to continue receiving follow-up services as a way to increase the likelihood of longer term stability for our clients. Erin will perform outreach to Somerville renters by informing Somerville community-based agencies and government entities of the PASS Program's resources.

18. Note if applicant has previously been funded by the Trust and if so, a concise summary of the number of residents served in the prior fiscal year and the impact of the program:

During FY 2017, the Tenant Stabilization Program (TSP) program benefitted 53 people (25 households); and, the CPA-Leasing Differential Program benefitted 13 households. The CPA-PASS Expansion program only began in the fall of 2018 and the program is still ramping up.

The PASS Program (HOME funding) benefitted 6 households (20 people). Due to the lack of housing and family waitlists being so long, all six (6) households applied for a second year of PASS. The following are brief descriptions of five of the households.

One (1) household received a PASS subsidy due to an eviction from the Somerville Housing Authority (SHA). The household consists of a single mother with 2 children; mom works full-time. The family is living in a market rate apartment. The PASS subsidy has assisted in maintaining the household's housing while they address their arrearages with SHA. Mom meets with a case manager twice a month to apply for alternative housing and address any other needs. The family is in their 2nd year of subsidy.

One (1) household consists of a single mother with one child and the grandmother.

The grandmother works full time, while her daughter completes her degree in a health related field; the goal is for mom to use her education to increase her income. PASS assists the family in maintaining their housing. Mom meets with case manager every 2 weeks to apply for alternative housing and address any other needs. The participant is in their 2nd year of PASS.

One (1) household consists of two (2) elderly adults with two (2) adult disabled children; mom is also disabled. The PASS program helps the family to continue living in a market rate apartment. The household meets with a case manager twice a month to apply for elderly/disabled housing. The family is in their 2nd year of PASS.

One (1) household consists of a couple with 2 children. One household member was in need of a kidney transplant; he left for Nigeria where he later passed away due to kidney failure. The PASS program helps the family maintain housing in a market rate unit while mom works full time. Mom meets with a case manager twice a month for housing search assistance.

One (1) household consists of a couple with 4 children. The PASS program helps the family maintain their housing in a market rate apartment. The father works 2 jobs. They meet with a case manager twice a month for housing search assistance. The household was referred to a First Time Homebuyers Program. The family is in their 2nd year of PASS.

19. Explain how the proposed activities/project addresses a need and/or strategy in City of Somerville's 5 Year Consolidated Plan (Can be viewed online at www.somervillema.gov).

The *PASS* project addresses the list of housing needs outlined in the Consolidated Plan's "Housing Needs Assessment". By helping to keep Somerville residents in their homes, this project is confronting the cost burden and affordability mismatch that exists in our community. The Housing Assessment has determined that there are not enough units in the city that are affordable to limited income households; this project keeps housing affordable for Somerville residents. As the study confirms, the few affordable rental units that exist in Somerville are in poor condition and not up to housing quality standards. If those experiencing housing instability begin to lose their units it will be extremely difficult for them to locate suitable housing that has lower asking rents; they also run the risk of becoming doubled up in housing environments that are overcrowded and unsafe. Or, worse yet, those affected may become in danger of falling into homelessness.

20. Explain how the proposed activities/project addresses a Goal or Action Step in the SomerVision Comprehensive Plan (Can be viewed at www.somervillema.gov).

The *PASS* project advances several Housing Goals outlined in the SomerVision Comprehensive Plan. The project *Preserves* and keeps affordable a balanced mix of rental housing for households of all types and economic status—including moderate income households that do not reside in subsidized housing; it *Mitigates* displacement of moderate income Somerville residents by allowing them to remain in their homes; and, the *PASS* project is a program that *Prevents* homelessness and addresses the housing needs of the homeless and those always at risk of homelessness.

21. Does your agency participate in a Continuum of Care? Please explain.

The Somerville Homeless Coalition (SHC) has been an integral part of the Somerville-Arlington CoC for decades. Over the past dozen years SHC has essentially attended every CoC Homeless Providers Group meetings. SHC continues to be the HMIS Lead Agency for the CoC and is the chair of the HMIS Committee. SHC has been co-chair of the entire CoC a few times and is also the chair of the CoC Governance committee. SHC has a CoC grant for a Coordinated Entry project and is the lead agency in facilitating the operation of the CoC's coordinated entry system.

22. Is your agency monitored by HUD or another funder for housing programs?

Yes **X** No _____

If yes, has the monitoring resulted in any currently open findings? Yes _____ **NO X**

[illegible]