

Springfield-Chicopee-Holyoke-Westfield-Hampden County
Continuum of Care

By its fiscal sponsor the City of Springfield

Response to RFR#: 16CBEHSHOMELESSRFR

February 2, 2016

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BUSINESS RESPONSE

A. ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

1. **Respondent:** Springfield-Chicopee-Holyoke-Westfield-Hampden County Continuum of Care (“Springfield-Hampden CoC” or “CoC”), through its fiscal agent/collaborative applicant the City of Springfield.

2. **FEIN** The City of Springfield’s FEIN is 04-6001415.

3. **Address** City of Springfield, 36 Court St., Springfield, MA 01103, (413) 787-6100.

4. **Massachusetts Address** Same as above.

5. **Board of Directors** The following individuals make up the Springfield-Hampden CoC’s Board of Directors:

Alicia Zoeller	City of Holyoke
Kathleen Lingenberg	City of Chicopee
Geraldine McCafferty	City of Springfield
Mike Suzor	Springfield Technical Community College
Doreen Fadus	Mercy Medical Center
Alvina Brevard	MA Department of Housing and Community Development
Steve Trueman	Regional Employment Board of Hampden County
Sylvia DeHass Phillips	United Way of Pioneer Valley
Karen Dean	Hampden County Sheriff’s Department
Paul Bailey	Springfield Partners for Community Action
Steve Huntley	Valley Opportunity Council
David Ferenz	Formerly homeless, PSH participant
Charlie Knight	Springfield resident, formerly homeless
Lauren Voyer	HAP Housing
Bill Miller	Friends of the Homeless
Jerry Ray	Mental Health Association
Marianne Polmetier	River Valley Counseling Center
Ann Lentini	Domus Inc.
Jodi Smith	YWCA
John Roberson	Center for Human Development
Ronn Johnson	MLK Family Services
Linette Camacho	Springfield Public Schools
Pamela Schwartz	Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness

6. **Type of Legal Entity** The Springfield-Hampden CoC is an unincorporated organization located in Hampden County, Massachusetts. Its fiscal agent is the City of Springfield, a Massachusetts municipality.

B. INTERESTS

1. No Respondent interest will conflict with the performance of services required under the contact.

2. The Springfield-Hampden CoC's fiscal sponsor and collaborative applicant is the City of Springfield, 36 Court St., Springfield, MA 01103. The CoC does not have any subsidiaries or other related organizations.

3. The Respondent Springfield-Hampden CoC does not have or expect to have any other contracts or agreements with the Commonwealth that will be in effect at the same time as a contract that may result from this RFR. The City of Springfield has 29 contracts with the Commonwealth in FY15 and will have 38 in FY16. Lists of all contracts are provided in Exhibit A.

4. If requested by EOHHS, the Respondent will provide additional information related to its financial, legal, contractual, or other business interests.

C. SUBCONTRACTORS

1. **Use of Subcontractors** The Respondent will use subcontractors to perform services under the Contract. Subcontractors will be selected through Requests for Proposals (RFP), which shall be issued February 8, 2016, with responses due by March 4, 2016; subcontractors that will be engaged if the Springfield-Hampden CoC receives an award will be selected by March 11, 2016.

2. **Roles and management of subcontractors** The City of Springfield, as fiscal sponsor/collaborative applicant for the Springfield-Hampden CoC will contract with the State of Massachusetts and will be responsible for carrying out all activities funded through this opportunity. The City will provide overall project management, submit quarterly invoices and provide all required reports and evaluation of grant activities. The City of Springfield, as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Lead for the Springfield-Hampden County CoC, will make the HMIS available at no cost for subcontractors, and will train subcontractors in use of HMIS. The City will maintain data for the program and will supervise subcontractors to ensure that high-quality data collection is maintained.

3. ***Coordinated Entry-Flexible Funds*** The City will subcontract with one to three nonprofit entities to administer flexible funds which will be used to prevent and end homelessness for Hampden County households. The entities will process requests for payment of flexible funds to third-party vendors (such as landlords, utility companies and moving companies) upon request from authorized service providers throughout the geographic catchment area. The entities will invoice and be paid monthly by the City of Springfield. These entities will be responsible for entry of data regarding assisted program participants in the Springfield-Hampden CoC Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Homeless Youth Initiative The City will subcontract with one to three nonprofit entities to provide coordinated programming that includes Youth Stabilization Staff, Kinship Care, Supported Transitional Independent Living, and flexible funds to be used to prevent and end homelessness for youth 18-24.

4. The City of Springfield guarantees that all subcontracts and other agreements or arrangements for reimbursement will be in writing and will contain terms consistent with all terms and conditions of the Contract.

5. The Springfield-Hampden CoC and the City of Springfield acknowledge that use of subcontractors must not cause any additional burden on EOHHS and shall not relieve the Respondent of any legal obligations under the Contract.

D. CONTRACT OFFICER

1. The Contract and any amendments will be signed by City of Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno. The City's primary contact for contract matters will be Geraldine McCafferty, Director, Springfield Office of Housing.

E. FINANCIAL CONDITION

1. The City of Springfield FY15 audit is provided in Exhibit B.
2. Certificate of Good Standing: Neither the Continuum of Care nor the City of Springfield are obligated to pay taxes to the Commonwealth and are therefore exempt from this requirement.

F. REQUIRED FORMS AND CERTIFICATIONS

1. All required forms and certifications are included in Exhibit C.

PROGRAMMATIC RESPONSE

A. ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

1. Organization Overview and Mission

The Springfield-Hampden CoC is an unincorporated organization of service providers, municipalities, businesses, advocacy organizations, faith-based organizations, and formerly homeless individuals that works to prevent and end homelessness throughout Hampden County. Membership in the CoC is open to all interested stakeholders, and the CoC both advertises annually seeking new members and holds two meetings annually that are open to the public. The CoC is governed by a Board of Directors made up of stakeholders from communities throughout Hampden County, and the organization operates pursuant to the guidance set forth in its [Governance Charter](#), which was adopted in 2013. The CoC has been in existence since the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development first created the Continuum of Care framework in the early 1990's.

While the original goal of CoCs was the coordination of homeless services, the Springfield-Hampden CoC was an early adopter of the more comprehensive goal of preventing and ending homelessness. The City of Springfield adopted a ten-year plan to end long-term homelessness in 2007, and the remainder of Hampden County (along with Hampshire and Franklin Counties) produced a similar plan in 2008. Oversight of these plans has been merged into the work of the CoC. The CoC has long recognized that the work of preventing and ending homelessness does not belong only with service providers, but is most effective when it is driven by a broad base of stakeholders, and the CoC has engaged these diverse stakeholders for over a decade. The CoC also values the insight that comes from consumers; the CoC's Board of Directors includes two formerly homeless individuals, and the majority of providers funded by the CoC incorporate formerly homeless persons on Boards of Directors or advisory committees.

The fiscal agent for the Springfield-Hampden CoC is the City of Springfield, which provide staff that lead the CoC and provide grant management for the 31 subcontracts to non-profit organizations that carry out the programs of the CoC. The City of Springfield is itself a leader in responding to homelessness, providing city resources for supportive housing and rapid rehousing, and advocating with the Springfield Housing Authority to dedicate housing for chronically homeless families and individuals. The City's work on homelessness has garnered awards from the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (Outstanding Regional Service Award), and the United Way of Pioneer Valley (Community Building Award).

In 2009, the CoC partnered with the neighboring Three-County CoC to create the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness, a collaboration of four counties initially formed in response to the Commonwealth's funding of regional networks to create innovative responses to homelessness. Today, the Network and the CoC have collaborated to lead the region's creation of a localized *Western Massachusetts Opening Doors* plan, which adopts the federal goals of ending veteran homelessness, ending chronic homelessness, ending family and youth homelessness, and setting a path to end all homelessness. The Network and the CoC work in close coordination, with four joint standing committees that meet monthly: Family Services, Individual Services, the Veteran Committee, and the Youth Committee.

The CoC has had a strong and long-term focus on overcoming health care barriers in order to stabilize homeless and at-risk individuals, particularly where behavioral health issues are a barrier to maintenance of stable housing. Over the last ten years, the CoC has created more than 250 units of permanent supportive housing (PSH) for chronically homeless individuals and families, the majority of whom struggle with mental health or substance abuse disorders. While early forms of PSH provided funding for case management to connect housing participants with appropriate care, more recent programs are using health care dollars to fund housing support staff, which incorporate support around both housing and health issues.

The CoC includes Mercy Medical Center's Health Care for the Homeless, which operates a clinic at the region's largest shelter/homeless resource center, and also provides mobile health care through outreach and visits to multiple locations throughout the region. Following health care reform, HCH has emphasized the importance of enrolling homeless and at-risk households in MassHealth. It provides a particularly flexible and responsive medical home to vulnerable homeless families.

Over the last year the CoC and HCH have been coordinating efforts to stabilize the most disabled people experiencing street homelessness. The CoC convenes regular meeting of HCH, crisis services, the Springfield police, outreach workers, and hospital staff, focused on improving engagement and entry to housing and treatment for these individuals. HCH has developed a high-end utilizers program, which provides coordinated case management for frequent users of emergency room services, as well as coordinated treatment plans among all area emergency rooms for these individuals. This is supplanted by a CoC-led Critical Response Team (CRT), which convenes a variety of stakeholders to focus on particularly difficult-to-engage/difficult-to-treat individuals living on the street.

2. Lead Entity's Organization and Project Staff

The applicant has provided an **Organizational Chart** in Exhibit D and **Key Personnel Resumes** in Exhibit E.

B. GEOGRAPHIC CATCHMENT AREA

The geographic catchment area is Hampden County, an area of 634 square miles with a population of 466,447 (2014 ACS 5-year). The county is made up of a mix of 23 urban, suburban and rural cities and towns, including the cities of Springfield, Chicopee, Holyoke, Westfield, and West Springfield. Seven towns meet the U.S. Census definition of rural (population under 2,500), and there are nine suburban towns. Seventy-five percent of Hampden County's population lives in urban communities.

Hampden County has a number of characteristics which are associated with instability and housing crisis. Springfield's unemployment rate is generally 2% higher than the state average. Hampden County's cities have high rates of poverty: Holyoke, Springfield, and Westfield all have rates near or above 30% (2014 ACS 5-year). Holyoke and Springfield include a number of neighborhoods which are racially/ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (40% or more poverty rate and more than 50% of the population are people of color)—areas that combine lack of opportunity, struggling schools, poor-quality housing and high-crime neighborhoods.

Throughout Hampden County, 36% of households with children are headed by a single parent; in Springfield 53%, in Holyoke 51% (2014 ACS 5-year). A long-term problem with intravenous drug use has contributed to 8.5% of the County's population living with HIV/AIDS (MA Surveillance Report), and the current opioid epidemic has hit the area hard. Springfield and Holyoke are migration destinations for a significant number of people leaving extreme poverty in Puerto Rico, and Hampden County is a refugee resettlement area, with growing populations from Africa, south Asia, and the Middle East. Fifteen percent of Springfield residents and 18% of Holyoke residents are linguistically isolated, meaning that household members age 5 and older speak English "less than very well." (2014 ACS 5-year)

C. CONSORTIUM NETWORK

Consortium members are listed and described below. Exhibit F includes a Memorandum of Understanding regarding coordinated entry endorsed by 13 agencies funded by the CoC Program, the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program, or Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), as well as letters of support from the other entities.

CoC/ESG/HOPWA Funded Service Provider Agencies

Catholic Charities Agency, 65 Elliot St., Springfield, MA 01105, (413) 734-3069, is a program of the non-profit Diocese of Springfield. The Agency works with individuals, families, parishes and communities to help them meet their needs, identify their strengths, address oppression, and overcome barriers to build a just and compassionate society. Since 2009, the Agency has operated a homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing program using funds from the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program, the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP), the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program, and private fundraising.

Center for Human Development (CHD), 332 Birnie Ave., Springfield, MA 01107, (413) 733-6624, SDO-certified. CHD is a large non-profit social services agency operating since 1972 in Western Massachusetts and Connecticut. The agency operates over 70 programs and services, including diversion, rapid rehousing, emergency shelter and permanent supportive housing for homeless and at-risk families, and the Safety Zone program, which provides outreach and emergency shelter for youth.

Domus, Inc., 4 School St., #5, Westfield, MA 01085, (413) 568-4494. Domus is a non-profit housing developer and property management company established in 1982. Domus operates 27 units of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals, and is in the process of developing 10 units of permanent supportive housing for homeless youth 18-24, scheduled to open summer 2016.

Friends of the Homeless, Inc. (FOH), 755 Worthington St., Springfield, MA 01105, (413) 732-3069. FOH is a non-profit organization established over 25 years ago to provide shelter, services and housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. FOH operates a 24/7 homeless resource center, with a Health Care for the Homeless clinic located on-site. The agency provides 110 units of housing (including permanent supportive housing) and operates 155 year-round emergency shelter beds and overflow shelter when needed.

Gandara Center, 147 Norman St., West Springfield, MA 01089, (413) 736-8329, is a nonprofit organization established in 1977. Its mission is to promote the well-being of Hispanics, African-American, and other culturally diverse populations through innovative, culturally

competent behavioral health, prevention, and education services. Gandara Center operates a broad array of programs, including rapid rehousing and transitional housing for youth aged 18-24, and the Springfield Family Support Center.

HAP, Inc. (HAP Housing), 322 Main St., Springfield, MA 01105, (413) 233-1500. HAP Housing, a nonprofit organization established over 40 years ago, is one of nine Massachusetts regional housing authorities and operates the region's Housing Consumer Education Center (HCEC). HAP Housing operates homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing programs (using RAFT, HomeBASE, ESG, and CoC Program funds), develops and operates affordable rental and homeownership housing, administers Section 8 assistance, and provides emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing for homeless families.

Human Resources Unlimited (HRU), 60 Brookdale Dr., Springfield, MA 01104, (413) 781-5359. HRU is a non-profit organization formed in 1970 which seeks to promote the recovery, resiliency and self-determination of the individuals with disabilities the agency serves and to empower them to become self-sufficient and engaged citizens. HRU operates clubhouses in Springfield and Westfield which provide support to members, including assistance in obtaining employment. HRU operates permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals.

Martin Luther King Jr Family Services (MLKFS), 106 Wilbraham Rd., Springfield, MA 01109, (413) 746-3655. MLKFS is a faith-based, non-profit multi-cultural and multi-service agency, formed in 1978, with the mission of nurturing and developing the skills, opportunities and spirit of families in the greater Springfield area. MLKFS operates eight units of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless families.

Mental Health Association (MHA), 995 Worthington St., Springfield, MA 01109, (413) 734-5376. MHA, founded in 1960, is a Springfield-based nonprofit provider of residential and support services for people impacted by mental illness, developmental disabilities, substance abuse and homelessness. MHA operates permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals, and the Hampden County Tenancy Preservation Program (TPP).

New North Citizens Council (NNCC), 2455 Main St., Springfield, MA, (413) 746-4885. NNCC, founded in 1973 and located in Springfield's North End, provides advocacy, public and human services to Hampden County residents with an emphasis on Hispanic/Latino community. NNCC offers organizational capacity in the areas of community development, advocacy and human service provision from a neighborhood-based perspective. The organization is governed by a Board of Directors, which is elected by neighborhood residents on an annual basis. NNCC provides homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing assistance to at-risk and homeless individuals who are HIV positive.

Open Pantry Community Services, 287 State St, Springfield, MA 01105, (413) 737-7062. Open Pantry is a private non-profit organization formed in 1975 which provides assistance to people who are hungry, homeless or disadvantaged. The organization operates a soup kitchen, food pantry, and provides social services and permanent supportive housing to people experiencing homelessness.

River Valley Counseling Center (RVCC), 303 Beech St., Holyoke, MA 01040, (413) 540-1100. RVCC is a nonprofit multi-service agency organized in 1953. The agency is a licensed mental health clinic with a range of traditional and non-traditional outpatient services to adults and children at several locations in Holyoke, Chicopee and Springfield. RVCC operates school-based health centers, and a psychiatric day treatment program. RVCC's HIV/AIDS Program operates permanent supportive housing for previously homeless individuals and families where a household member is HIV positive.

Valley Opportunity Council, 35 Mount Carmel Ave., Chicopee, MA 01013, (413) 552-1554. VOC is the federally-designated CAA for Holyoke and Chicopee, and offers a broad array of social service programs. VOC operates family emergency shelter and permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless families.

Other Service Provider Agencies

Eliot Community Human Services, Inc. (Eliot CHS), 186 Bedford St., Lexington, MA 02420, (781) 861-0891. Eliot CHS is a private, non-profit human services organization providing a continuum of behavioral health services for people of all ages throughout Massachusetts. The organization was formed in 1972 when two existing organizations merged. Eliot CHS operates Project for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH), which provides mental health assessment, treatment, advocacy, benefit assistance, DMH referrals, housing assistance and other support services to the adult homeless population in Hampden County and throughout Massachusetts.

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, 97 North Hatfield Rd., P.O. Box 160, Hatfield, MA 01038, (413) 247-9738. The Food Bank is a non-profit organization formed in 1982 which distributes food to member agencies throughout the four counties of Western Massachusetts and works to strengthen the emergency food network, increase the capacity of member agencies, and develop long-term projects to fight the underlying causes of hunger in our community. The Executive Director of the Food Bank is the chair of the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness.

Greater Westfield Committee for the Homeless, Inc./Samaritan Inn, Free St., P.O. Box 264, Westfield, MA 01086, (413) 568-3122, is a non-profit organization that provides emergency services, support services and transitional housing.

Providence Ministries for the Needy, Inc. (PMN), P.O. Box 6269, Holyoke, MA 01040, (413) 536-9109. PMN, a non-profit agency formed 36 years ago and associated with the Sisters of Providence, operates 25 units of transitional housing and 50 single room occupancy units for formerly homeless individuals.

Square One, 1095 Main St., Floor 2, Springfield, MA 01103, (413) 732-5183. Square One is a non-profit organization founded in 1883 (then known as the Springfield Day Nursery) in response to a critical and unmet community need for child care among Springfield's working families. Today Square One provides early childhood education and family support services to over 2000 families a year. Square One's supportive services for DCF-involved, homeless, and formerly homeless families include home visiting, counseling, support groups, supervised visitation and family support centers.

Womanshelter/Compañeras, P.O. Box 1099, Holyoke, MA 01041, (413) 538-9717 is a non-profit agency founded in 1980 as a grassroots collective that provides comprehensive services to more than 1400 victims and survivors of domestic violence annually.

YWCA of Western Massachusetts, 1 Clough St., Springfield, MA 01118, (413) 732-3121, SDO-certified. The YWCA is a 145-year-old institution that provides safe places for women and children in crisis-particularly from domestic violence and sexual assault. It offers women counseling, job training, child-care, and health and fitness, and also offers job training to people ages 16-21 who are out of school. The agency has 48 years of contracting and managing state government contracts, and 25 years of federal contracting and management. The YWCA operates emergency shelter, transitional housing and rapid rehousing programs in Hampden County.

Community Action Agencies

Springfield Partners for Community Action (SPCA), 721 State Street, Springfield, MA 01109, (413)263-6500; SOMBA-Certified. SPCA is the federally-designated Community Action Agency (CAA) for the greater Springfield area, established in 1964 under the Economic Opportunity Act. The nonprofit 501(C)(3) organization operates 13 programs and serves approximately 7000 low-income people annually. SPCA subcontracts from Soldier on to provide Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) assistance, and operates an eviction prevention program.

Valley Opportunity Council (VOC), 35 Mount Carmel Ave., Chicopee, MA 01013, (413) 552- 1554. VOC, included in the CoC-funded agencies above, is the federally-designated CAA for Holyoke and Chicopee.

Housing Authorities

Chicopee Housing Authority (CHA), 128 Meeting House Rd, Chicopee, MA 01013, (413) 592-6132. CHA operates 383 units of public housing and administers 393 section 8 vouchers.

Holyoke Housing Authority (HHA), 475 Maple St., #1, Holyoke, MA 01040, (413) 539-2220. HHA operates 921 public housing units and administers 1280 section 8 vouchers. HHA partners with HAPHousing to use the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program to provide permanent supportive housing to chronically homeless families with young heads of households.

Springfield Housing Authority (SHA), 60 Congress St., Springfield, MA 01101, (413) 785-4500. SHA operates over 2000 public housing units and over 2700 Section 8 vouchers. SHA has partnered with the City of Springfield to operate a project-based section 8 program targeted to chronically homeless individuals and families, and has partnered with the Commonwealth to operate Housing First public housing units for homeless families.

Westfield Housing Authority (WHA), 12 Alice Burke Way, Westfield, MA 01085, (413) 568-9283. WHA administers 265 section 8 vouchers. The agency partners with Domus, Inc. to provide permanent supportive housing to chronically homeless individuals.

West Springfield Housing Authority, 37 Oxford Pl, West Springfield, MA 01089, (413) 734-2681. WSHA administers 239 section 8 vouchers.

Municipalities

City of Chicopee, 17 Springfield St., Chicopee, MA 01013, (413) 594-1400.

City of Holyoke, 536 Dwight St., Holyoke, MA 01040, (413) 322-5510.

City of Springfield, 36 Court St., Springfield, MA 01103, (413) 787-6500.

State Agencies

Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF), Western Regional Office, 140 High St., 5th floor, Springfield, MA 01105, (413) 452-3350.

Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Division of Housing Stabilization, 100 Cambridge St., Suite 300, Boston, MA 02114, (617) 573-1100.

Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH), Western MA Area, 1 Prince St., Northampton, MA 01060, (413) 587-6200.

Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), Western Regional Health Office, 23 Service Center Road, Northampton, MA 01060, (413) 586-7525.

Massachusetts Department of Public Health, F.O.R. Families Program, 250 Washington St., Boston, MA 02108, (617) 624-6000.

Health Care Providers

Baystate Medical Center (Baystate Health), 280 Chestnut St, Springfield, MA 01199, (413) 794-0000. Baystate Health is a not-for-profit, mission-driven, integrated health system headquartered in Springfield and serving all of Western Massachusetts. Baystate Health has roots dating to the founding of Springfield City Hospital in 1873. The hospital works closely with the City and homeless provider organizations regarding unsheltered high end utilizers of emergency room service, and frequently refers homeless and at-risk families and individuals for assistance with housing needs.

Behavioral Health Network, Inc. (BHN), 417 Liberty St., Springfield, MA 01104, (413) 747-0745. BHN is a non-profit, comprehensive, community-based behavioral health organization established in 1938. BHN operates six clinics, a partial hospitalization program, addiction services (including detox, in-patient and residential), crisis intervention (including mobile and hospital-based assessment and triage), and forensic court evaluation services (including the Mental Health Court in Springfield). BHN collaborates with the Springfield Police Department to provide street outreach services through teams that partner a mental health worker with a plainclothes officer.

Mercy Medical Center – Health Care for the Homeless, 271 Carew St. Springfield, MA 01104, (413) 748-9000. Mercy Medical Center is a faith-based, non-profit health organization founded in 1873 by the Sisters of Providence and now part of the Trinity Health System. Mercy has operated the Health Care for the Homeless (HCH) since 1983, providing primary care

services on-site at 46 shelters, soup kitchens, job placement sites and transitional programs throughout Hampden, Franklin and Hampshire counties; as well as through street outreach contacts. In addition to its multi-site and street outreach, HCH operates a daily clinic at the FOH Homeless Resource Center.

Tapestry Health, 296 Nonotuck St, Florence, MA 01062, (413) 586-2016. Tapestry Health is a regional non-profit organization founded in 1973 that offers family planning and reproductive health services to marginalized populations throughout Western Massachusetts. Tapestry Health provides HIV-prevention outreach and a drop-in center in Springfield, a needle-exchange program in Holyoke, HIV testing and counseling, and a Women's, Infant, Children (WIC) Program.

Employment

CareerPoint, 850 High Street, Holyoke, MA 01040, (413) 532-4900. CareerPoint is a one-stop career center established 20 years ago. CareerPoint has successfully worked with numerous community partners on many kinds of grants and programs designed to assist individuals with barriers, such as homelessness, to move forward on a positive career path. CareerPoint is a partner in the successful Secure Jobs Initiative, which supports formerly homeless families receiving rapid rehousing assistance to obtain and maintain employment.

FutureWorks Career Center, 1 Federal St #103-3, Springfield, MA 01105, (413) 828-2800. FutureWorks is a One Stop Career Center established 20 years ago that receives funding from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development-Department of Career Services and U.S. Department of Labor to assist people seeking employment and firms seeking to hire. The agency is a partner in the successful Secure Jobs Initiative, which supports formerly homeless families receiving rapid rehousing assistance to obtain and maintain employment.

Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc. (REB), 1441 Main St., Suite 111, Springfield, MA 01103, (413) 787-1547. Since 1980, the REB has been the region's primary planner and convener to address workforce development issues. Established by federal and state legislation, the REB is a business-led, non-profit corporation that engages members from business, education, labor and community-based agencies to set public policies to build a better workforce.

Community Colleges

Holyoke Community College (HCC), 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke, MA 01040, (413) 538-7000. HCC is a 70-year-old institution governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the

Governor. The College is an Education and Training provider with programming collaborations and funding connections including the Department of Education, Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Department of Housing and Economic Development, Commonwealth Corporation, Mass Development, the Regional Employment Board and One-Stop Career Centers, the Department of Transitional Assistance, Mass Rehab, and the Department of Mental Health.

Springfield Technical Community College (STCC), 1 Armory Square, Springfield, MA 01102, (413) 781-7822 STCC is one of the largest Community College in the Massachusetts State College system. It was founded in 1967, and has approximately 7,000 students. STCC is the only technical community college in Massachusetts.

McKinney Vento Liaisons

Chicopee Public Schools McKinney Vento Homeless Education Program, 180 Broadway, Chicopee, MA 01020, (413) 594-3496.

Springfield Public Schools, Parent and Community Education Division, McKinney Vento Homeless Education Program, 91 School St., Springfield, MA 01105, (413) 787-6959.

West Springfield Public Schools, McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program, 26 Central St., 4th floor, West Springfield, MA 01085, (413) 263-3288.

Law Enforcement

Hampden County Sheriff's Department - After-Incarceration Support Services (AISS), 736 State St., Springfield, MA 01109, (413) 781-2050. AISS is a program of the Hampden County Sheriff's Department which has been operating since 1996. It works with offenders in the Hampden County jail to create individualized release plans, and operates in the community to provide assistance and programming to help ex-offenders reintegrate, including assistance in obtaining and maintaining housing.

Springfield Police Department (SPD), 130 Pearl St., Springfield, MA 01105, (413) 787-6310. SPD provides law enforcement throughout the City of Springfield, and operates a street outreach program in conjunction with BHN, Inc., in which police and mental health crisis workers partner to engage unsheltered homeless people. In this role, SPD helps the CoC identify and engage individuals who do not seek out service, and refer these individuals to the coordinated entry system for access to permanent supportive housing and other treatment and housing options.

Veterans Service Organizations

Bi-Lingual Veterans Outreach Centers of Massachusetts, Inc., 281 Franklin St., Springfield, MA 01104, (413) 731-0194, is a non-profit organization that provides outreach, advocacy, assistance with claims, discharge upgrades and other services to veterans in Western Massachusetts. The Bi-Lingual Veterans Outreach Center operates transitional and permanent supportive housing for homeless veterans.

Soldier On, 421 North Main St., Building 6, Leeds, MA 01053, (413) 582-3059. Soldier On is a private nonprofit organization committed to ending veteran homelessness. The agency was founded in 1994, and provides homeless veterans with services and transitional and permanent supportive housing. Soldier On is developing permanent supportive housing for veterans in two Hampden County communities, Agawam and Chicopee.

Veterans Administration Central Western Massachusetts Health Care System, 421 North Main St., Leeds, MA 01053, (413) 584-4040.

Veterans Inc, 1 Federal St., Building 101, Springfield, MA, 01105, (413) 733-1249. Veterans, Inc. is the largest provider of support services to veterans and their families in New England. Since 1990, the agency has helped more than 60,000 veterans. It operates the Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) program in Springfield.

Housing Court

Western Division Housing Court, 37 Elm Street, Springfield, MA, (413) 748-7838, is a department of the Trial Court of the Commonwealth. It has jurisdiction over all matters involving residential housing, including but not limited to evictions, code enforcement and civil matters.

Formerly Homeless

Two formerly homeless individuals, *David Ferenz* and *Charlie Knight*, are on the Board of Directors of the CoC, and involved with committees and policy-making.

Advocacy

Arise for Social Justice, 467 State St., Springfield, MA 01105, (413) 734-4948. Arise is a 30-year-old, low-income led, anti-oppression organization. The non-profit entity is governed by a board of directors and operates out of a central Springfield office to lead multiple organizing

campaigns. The organization also advocates on behalf of low-income people, including those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Community Legal Aid (CLA), 405 Main St., 4th floor, Worcester, MA 01608, (800) 649-3718. CLA is a non-profit organization that provides free civil legal services to low-income and elderly residents of central and western Massachusetts. It was formed by the merger in 2011 of two pre-existing programs, one of which was Western Massachusetts Legal Services, which had been in existence since 1972. CLA has offices in Springfield and Holyoke.

Community Leaders and Philanthropy

Berkshire Bank Foundation, P.O. Box 1308, Pittsfield, MA, 01202, (413) 447-1724 provides grant funding to non-profit organizations in its service area, which includes Hampden County. The bank's Community Reinvestment Act Officer is a member of the Leadership Council of the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness.

Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, 1500 Main St., Springfield, MA 01115, (413) 732-2858, was founded in 1991. The Community Foundation administers a charitable endowment consisting of nearly 600 separately identified funds (\$121 million) serving Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin Counties. All grants have a single goal: making life better for all in our region.

Fireman Foundation, 800 South Street, Suite 610, Waltham, MA 02453, (617) 482-5620. The Paul and Phyllis Fireman Foundation is a family foundation based in Boston, Massachusetts. Founded in 1986 it dedicates a major share of its funding resources to ending family homelessness in the Commonwealth. The Foundation has supported a number of initiatives of the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness.

Peoples Bank, 330 Whitney Avenue, Holyoke MA 01040, (413) 538-9500. Established in 1885, Peoples Bank is one of the area's oldest and most respected community Banks. It believes in its responsibility to the community and consistently looks for ways to support the Pioneer Valley and make it a premier place to live and work. A Peoples Bank senior vice president sits on the Leadership Council of the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness.

United Way of Pioneer Valley (UWPV), 1441 Main Street, Springfield, (413) 727-2691. Founded over 90 years ago, the UWPV's mission is to mobilize people and resources to strengthen communities. It envisions a thriving region where individuals have opportunities to realize their potential, become economically self-sufficient and contribute collectively to improve the quality of life in their communities. The United Way is the fiscal agent of the Western MA Network to End Homelessness.

Regional Network

Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness, 1441 Main Street, Springfield, (413) 727-2691, was created in 2009 as part of a statewide initiative to create regional networks to end homelessness. Its mission is to create collaborative solutions to end homelessness through a housing first approach that prioritizes prevention, rapid re-housing and housing stabilization.

Legislative Support

The CoC and Network works collaboratively with our legislators to create solutions that prevent and end homelessness. Exhibit F includes letters of support from Senate President Stanley Rosenberg and Senators Benjamin Downing, Donald Humason, Eric Lesser, and James Welch, and Representatives Brian Ashe, Tricia Farley-Bouvier, Michael Finn, Peter Kocot, Stephen Kulik, William Pignatelli, John Scibak, Todd Smola, Ellen Story, Jose Tosado, and Aaron Vega.

D. CONTRACT SCOPE OF SERVICES

1. Lead Entity Qualifications

The Springfield-Hampden CoC, as an unincorporated membership organization governed by a Board of Directors, is responsible for making CoC/consortium policy and funding decisions, and for general oversight of all required activities of the federal Continuum of Care Program. As the fiscal agent and collaborative applicant for the CoC, the City of Springfield (through its Office of Housing) maintains legal responsibility for all contracting, subcontracting, brokering of partnerships, data collection and analysis, and achieving and reporting outcomes. For this funding opportunity, the City shall be solely responsible for meeting all Contract obligations.

Experience with housing and/or homelessness The core work of both the CoC and the City of Springfield Office of Housing is housing and homelessness. The CoC has been spearheading implementation of the ten-Year Plan to End Long-Term Homelessness since 2007, and is an active participant in the Zero 2016 campaign to end veteran and chronic homelessness. The CoC has actively managed its CoC funds over the years, to focus funds on the most effective programs and highest needs.

The Office of Housing has served as the CoC administrator for over two decades; created its own rapid rehousing program prior to the federal Homeless Prevention and Rapid Program (HPRP) in 2009; and pioneered a City-Housing Authority collaboration to provide permanent supportive housing, in which the City provides housing stabilization services to chronically homeless individuals and families housed by the Springfield Housing Authority.

Fiscal capacity to receive and distribute funding Funds will be received and distributed by the City of Springfield Office of Housing, which receives and distributes a minimum of \$4.5 million in federal funds each year through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program, CoC Program, ESG Program and HOPWA Program. In the last five years, this Office has also administered \$1.7 million HPRP funds and \$4.9 million Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds. While the City administers some programs with its own staff, the majority are subcontracted to community non-profit organizations. As a result, the Office of Housing has extensive experience with procurement, management of subcontracts, payment to subcontractors, and invoicing of and reporting to a principle grantor. Cathy Buono, Director of Administration and Finance (resume included in Exhibit E), is responsible for fiscal management of Office of Housing grants.

Administrative capacity to coordinate multiple agencies and players Springfield dedicates significant staff capacity to coordination of the CoC and administration of CoC, ESG and HOPWA grants. The CoC is coordinated by Geraldine McCafferty, Director of Housing

(resume included in Exhibit E), who has been coordinating the CoC since 2007. Ms. McCafferty has shepherded the CoC into more formal governance following the federal enactment of the HEARTH Act, including creation of performance standards, data-driven evaluation of programs, and creation of a coordinated entry system for entrance into permanent supportive housing.

The City has a full-time Senior Program Manager, Maureen Bonavita (resume included as Exhibit E), who is responsible for subrecipient grant management, including contracting, program monitoring, receipt/processing of invoices, and oversight of annual program reporting. The City employs a full-time Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Administrator, Deborah Merkmán, (resume included as Exhibit E), who is responsible for maintaining the HMIS, training HMIS users, managing data quality, running reports, and providing data for analysis and required reports.

Experience brokering partnerships and building relationships across sectors The CoC has excelled in partnering and cross-sector collaboration. Partnering work that has been particularly relevant to this funding opportunity was use of federal HPRP funds from 2009 to 2012 to create a coordinated homelessness prevention system which identified two lead agencies—one for families and one for individuals—with other agencies partnering to process applications and determine eligibility for assistance. Recent cross-sector work includes monthly meetings of police, emergency room staff, crisis workers, outreach staff, and permanent supportive housing providers, who are working together to identify, engage, and house unsheltered chronically homeless individuals.

Organizational structure that ensures integration and coordination as well as timely and flexible operations The operation of the CoC by a broad-based Board of Directors, and the fact that the CoC itself does not have an operating budget have enabled it to operate effectively and efficiently, without interference from conflicts of interest. At the same time, the structure and administrative support offered by the City of Springfield brings both professionalism and sufficient staff support to be able to act timely.

Strong partnerships with municipalities and local public housing authorities The CoC and its members have the strong support of the County's municipalities, as demonstrated by letters of support submitted by Mayors of the major cities. Providers in Holyoke and Westfield have collaborative relationships with housing authorities to provide permanent supportive housing. In addition to serving as the fiscal sponsor for the CoC, the City of Springfield has also collaborated with the Springfield Housing Authority to provide permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless families and individual, and the City has a three-part collaboration with the Hampden County Sheriff's Department and the Mental Health Association to provide permanent supportive housing for seriously mentally ill individuals following release from incarceration.

2. Current Trends of Homelessness and Community Initiatives

Homeless Count. The Hampden County 2015 Point-in-Time Count identified 3,002 people homeless on the night of January 29, 2015. The population included 373 adult individuals without children, 2,628 persons in families, and one unaccompanied youth under 18. Of those counted, 93% were in emergency shelter, 6% were in transitional housing, and less than 1% (10 people) were unsheltered. (The 2016 count has just been completed on January 27, 2016, but data from this report is still being tabulated and confirmed.)

In December 2016 the CoC submitted Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data for the Annual Homeless Assistance Report (AHAR) compiled by HUD for Congress. That report indicates that for the year October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015, a total of 1,278 unduplicated individuals and 4,930 unduplicated persons in families accessed emergency shelter in Hampden County.

AHAR data on youth aged 18-24 indicate that, during the year referenced above, 193 individual youth and 577 parenting youth accessed emergency shelter in Hampden County. Local Education Agencies collect data on youth under 18, which is reported to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. For the 2014-2015 school year, Hampden County LEAs reported 46 unaccompanied homeless youth under 18.

Year-to-Year Trends. The trends for individual and family homelessness in Hampden County diverge. The CoC has experienced small fluctuations in the year-to-year count of individuals, with an overall slight downward trend over multiple years. The CoC has had a long-standing focus on ending chronic homelessness through a housing first approach, which has resulted in steady decreases in the number of chronically homeless individuals—both on the streets and shelter.

In contrast to the downward trend among individuals, the CoC has experienced regular annual increases in homeless families: there were 41% more homeless families in 2015 than in 2013. Over the last several years, the number of families in motels has been decreasing, but this decrease was accompanied by an increase in congregate apartment units for families. While community factors such as high poverty, pervasive substance abuse, poor quality housing and high unemployment cause housing instability for both individuals and families, the CoC sees two factors contributing to the particularly high and rising rates of family homelessness: 1) access to emergency shelter being the long-standing predominant response to a housing crisis; and 2) very long shelter stays.

Community Initiatives The Hampden County CoC is one of 75 CoCs nationwide participating in the Zero 2016 Campaign, an aggressive and data-driven effort led by Community

Solutions, Inc., to end veteran and chronic homelessness. With technical assistance from this effort, the Hampden County CoC has made numerous system improvements, including implementation of a By-Name List of chronically homeless and homeless veterans, and coordinated entry into CoC-funded permanent supportive housing. The coordinated entry relies on all agencies using a common assessment tool—the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), and creation of a single common wait list.

Data indicates that the CoC is on track to end chronic homelessness in 2016. Recent collaborative work with emergency rooms, police, crisis workers, outreach, and housing providers is moving toward solutions for some of the community's most vulnerable and hard-to-serve individuals. The CoC now has just 13 veterans remaining in emergency shelter (and no unsheltered veterans), and 4 of the sheltered veterans have housing plans and should be housed soon. The remainder are either very newly-identified or not eligible for Veterans Health Administration benefits, which reduces the assistance available to them. While the CoC has always had low numbers of homeless veterans, there have been a number of persistently homeless veterans that have avoided services. Over the past year, collaboration of various agencies looking for these individuals, combined with the efforts of a Veterans Administration peer outreach worker have resulted in finding and engaging these individuals.

The CoC is applying lessons learned from the Zero 2016 initiative to family homelessness. In 2015, the CoC, using HUD CoC Program funding, introduced 18 new units of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless families, and it collaborated with DHCD to create a By-Name List of homeless families, each of which was assessed using the Vulnerability Index-Service Decision Prioritization Tool (VI-SPDAT), and the highest-scoring (and therefore most needy) families were prioritized for the new units. Through this initiative, the CoC ended homelessness for some families who had been in shelter for years.

The Springfield-Hampden CoC, collaborating with the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness, has been a leader in advancing the Secure Jobs Initiative, a coordinated service system that links at-risk or homeless families with the resources required to enter the workforce. Through partnerships with career centers, regional employment boards, community colleges and area businesses, Secure Jobs provides one-on-one support to each family on their path to stable employment. Over 250 homeless or at-risk families have entered the workforce through Secure Jobs' assistance in the last 3 years.

The CoC has been building its capacity to respond to homelessness among youth 18-24. The CoC currently funds 8 units of transitional housing for homeless youth, and 9 units of permanent supportive housing for parenting youth. The CoC expects to receive new CoC funding in 2016 to begin a rapid rehousing program targeted to youth aged 18-24.

3. Implementation Plan

Consortium

The Springfield-Hampden County CoC is an existing and well-established consortium of providers and other stakeholders, as demonstrated by the members described in this application, and the attached letters of support. In order to meet the requirements of the federal HEARTH Act, the CoC has formalized its governance structure, created CoC policies and procedures, created policies and procedures and memorandums of understanding to guide implementation of its Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and begun measuring and reporting on system progress toward preventing and ending homelessness. The CoC's [Governance Charter](#) sets forth its mission, membership criteria, structure, operating guidelines, and governance model. The CoC is governed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership, which meets at least quarterly. The Governance Charter includes the process for electing Board members and the working committees that carry out the duties of the CoC. The CoC is administered by the City of Springfield Director of Housing, Geraldine McCafferty (resume provided in Exhibit E), who has been the CoC Administrator since 2006.

The CoC has a number of standing committees which meet monthly. These include committees focused on particular subpopulations (families, individuals, veterans, and unaccompanied youth), a coordinating committee on chronically homeless individuals, a Performance and Outcomes Committee, an HMIS/Data Committee, and the CoC Application Committee. The committees focused on families, individuals, veterans and unaccompanied youth are joint committees of the CoC and the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness, which are staffed by the Network's Director, Pamela Schwartz (resume provided in Exhibit E), who advertises the meetings through inclusive email mailing lists, as well as on the public website of the Network, www.westernmasshousingfirst.org. The Network distributes agendas in advance and provides minutes of each meeting through email and by publishing on the website. The Network Director consults with the CoC Administrator prior to each meeting to set the agenda and goals for the meeting.

The CoC has also had a long-standing REACH Committee, which also meets monthly. REACH is a collaborative effort of outreach workers, shelter staff and providers of permanent supportive housing to identify, assess, and house chronically homeless individuals. The REACH meeting is convened by a Network consultant, David Modzelweski (resume provided in Exhibit E). Mr. Modzelewski also convenes a Critical Response Team (CRT) when necessary, to address the challenges of very hard-to-serve/engage unsheltered individuals.

The CoC is part of the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness, formed in 2009 in response to the Commonwealth's funding for regional networks to prevent and end

homelessness. The Network encompasses the four counties of Western Massachusetts and two CoCs, and engages a Leadership Council of 50 community leaders and stakeholders in its mission.

Coordinated Entry (CE)

The Springfield-Hampden County CoC has already created many components of its CE system. This section describes the existing components of the CoC's CE system, as well as the components of the system that will be expanded or formalized in the first months of 2016.

Guiding Principles and Goals for CE The Springfield-Hampden CoC has adopted Guiding Principles for CE, which include: a Housing First orientation; an emphasis on the client's goals, choices, and preferences, and an unwavering respect for their strengths; use of assessment tools to identify the best fit between a household's needs and the available resources; provision of the minimum assistance necessary for the shortest time possible, in order to stretch resources to serve the maximum number of households; and maximization of mainstream resources to support families in their own homes and communities.

The CoC's goals for coordinated entry are to have multiple access points throughout Hampden County, which use common assessment tools and eligibility criteria, and are able to access the same resources using the same standards. While the CoC is implementing coordinated entry for all populations, the existence of a state framework to respond to family homelessness has led to development of parallel coordinated entry systems for individuals and for families.

CE for Diversion, Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing The CoC has substantially created its CE system for diversion, rapid rehousing, and access to permanent supportive housing. For ***individuals without children***, Catholic Charities is the main hub for diversion and rapid rehousing, as it administers the community's diversion and rapid rehousing funds, but multiple providers have the ability to accept and process applications for the funds. These providers include Friends of the Homeless (emergency shelter and 24/7 homeless resource center), Open Pantry Social Services (case management), the YWCA (domestic violence provider), and HAPHousing's Housing Consumer Education Center (HCEC). The providers meet quarterly as an advisory group. In early 2016, the CoC will identify and include additional rapid rehousing intake providers to cover cities of Holyoke, Chicopee and Westfield, and it will increase provision of information about this resource to all consortium members and others who encounter families in need of this resource.

For permanent supportive housing, the CE system consists of multiple partners who are responsible for outreach and identification of chronically homeless individuals and assessment of vulnerability using a common tool, coordinated maintenance of a By-Name List, and the use of

the By-Name List for all PSH providers to fill housing openings. The HMIS Lead and REACH Committee keep the list and coordinate the process of matching individuals to open PSH units. The CE system for individuals will be enhanced in July 2016, because FOH will begin receiving CoC funds to provide staff dedicated to CE for diversion, rapid rehousing and access to PSH.

For *families with children*, the main hubs are HAP Housing's HCEC, and CHD's Diversion Program, which is co-located with DHCD's entry to the family shelter system. These two locations are very well-known throughout the entire geography of the CoC as the locations to access assistance in the event of a housing crisis. A third resource for families is Catholic Charities, which can advise about eligibility for RAFT and HomeBASE, but also has additional resources to assist families not eligible for RAFT or HomeBASE; in particular, Catholic Charities administers rapid rehousing funds for families transitioning out of domestic violence shelters.

Chronically homeless families access permanent supportive housing through a collaborative effort of DHCD, CHD, VOC, HAP and New England Farm Workers Council. These entities identify and assess families, who are then added to a common wait list, ranked by vulnerability score as determined by the Family VI-SPDAT. PSH providers draw eligible families from the list for available PSH units.

CE for Prevention The CoC has a number of prevention programs, including prevention funds administered by HAP and Catholic Charities, the presence of Catholic Charities staff in Housing Court on "eviction day, and a Tenancy Preservation Program (TPP) operated by the Mental Health Association, these programs are not currently as coordinated as other components of the CoC's system. The CoC will support CE for these programs, and link them more closely to diversion programs, by convening a series of meetings during the first half of 2016 to share information about available resources, coordinate access to resources, and create and implement a plan for informing the broader community about these resources.

Flexible Funds

The CoC seeks \$300,000 annually in flexible funds to provide financial assistance for prevention, diversion and rapid rehousing. The funds will be administered by existing staff at provider agencies. The CoC will not use any of the funds for network coordination.

Housing Stability Plan The CoC's current prevention efforts assist households with both financial assistance and behavioral health support. The existing funding for financial assistance, primarily available for rent arrears, is usually fully spent by eight or nine months into the fiscal year (February or March) and also excludes some households. The CoC will use EOHHS flexible funds to fill these gaps. In addition to making funds available for more of the year, the

CoC will also use funds to prevent eviction for public and subsidized housing, an initiative it will carry out in partnership with local housing authorities.

Families at risk of homelessness due to behavioral health issues are assisted by MHA's Tenancy Preservation Project, which already has access to flexible funds to prevent eviction. The Flexible Funds Administrator Agency will coordinate with TPP if there are funding needs that TPP cannot cover.

Diversion Plan and Rapid Rehousing Plan Funding from this opportunity will supplement resources currently used for diversion and rapid rehousing, enabling the CoC to have available funding for more of the year (existing funds are usually fully spent by the 9th month of the fiscal year) and to serve households not eligible for existing funds.

Administration of Flexible Funds In order to simplify administration and be able to distribute funds rapidly, the CoC will contract with a limited number (1-3) of Flexible Funds Administrator Agencies which will process payments of flexible funds. These agencies will be selected through a request for proposal (RFP) process that will be completed prior to the Commonwealth's grant start date. Entities will only be eligible to apply if they identify other service providers (Intake Agencies) which will be able to take and process applications for the funds.

Measuring Success: Data Collection and Reporting

All agencies participating in this initiative (both Administrator Agencies and Intake Agencies) will be required to record data about households assisted in the CoC's HMIS, which will provide data on the numbers and characteristics of households that receive assistance. The CoC shall use the following measures of success:

- A CE Network of at least 50 community entities that understand where and how Families can access homelessness assistance
- Intake Agencies that can process requests for assistance located in the cities of Springfield, Holyoke, Chicopee, Westfield, as well as at locations accessible to survivors of domestic violence and veterans
- Creation and adoption of common intake forms, eligibility standards, and written policies and procedures for families to access assistance.
- If funded at the requested amount of \$300,000, the CoC will use the funds to prevent and end homelessness for 180 households annually.

Schedule

Select consortium service providers	
Advertise RFP for Flexible Funds Administrator(s)	Feb. 3, 2016
Release RFP for Flexible Funds Administrator(s)	Feb. 8, 2016
Deadline for RFP responses	Mar. 4, 2016
Selection of consortium service providers	Mar. 10, 2016
Create CE Policies and Procedures for Prevention, Diversion and Rapid Rehousing	
Weekly meetings to finalize assistance eligibility, common application form, common assessment tool(s) and policies and procedures	Feb. 7 – Mar. 18
CoC Board of Directors and membership approval of CE policies and procedures	March 25, 2016
Coordinate Intake Agencies	
Flexible Funds Administrator enters MOUs with Intake Agencies	March 15-31, 2016
Training event for Intake Agencies	March 31, 2016
Initiate Flexible Funds Program	
Intake Agencies begin taking and processing intakes	April 1, 2016
Outreach to Consortium Members	
Create education materials about CE and flexible funds	April 30, 2016
Provide outreach and training for consortium members	May 1, 2016 and continuing

4. Youth Implementation Plan

The CoC seeks \$600,000 to support implementation of its Youth Plan. Over the past few years, the CoC has taken initial steps to build capacity to appropriately serve youth age 18-24, including Gandara's creation of 8 transitional housing units and a new CoC project funded in 2016 to create medium-term rapid rehousing; HAP's 9 units of PSH for parenting youth, and Domus' new 10-unit PSH for youth, scheduled to open in June 2016. CHD's Safety Zone, which is a kinship program for youth under 18, also provides street outreach for youth up to age 21. Through participation in the youth count in 2014 and 2015, the CoC substantially increased coordination with entities that serve youth, including community colleges, high school guidance counselors, the Out Now drop-in center for LBGTQ youth, programs for parenting youth, Youth Build, the Workforce Investment Act youth employment programs, and the Roca program for youth who have been in the criminal justice system. However, there are substantial gaps in our service delivery system, and large numbers of youth access the CoC's adult individual and family shelters. The CoC is continuing to increase capacity for youth in a system that is separate from older adults, meets their unique developmental needs and challenges, and is focused on stable housing and relationships.

Flexible and Locally Based Response to the Needs of Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

The CoC will use EOHHS funds to support a network of new services for youth aged 18-24, which will include youth stabilization staff, short-term kinship care available for youth 18-21 (who are not currently served by this type of program in Hampden County), and supported rapid rehousing assistance for youth transitioning to living independently.

Housing Stability Plan The network of services supported by EOHHS will include a full-time **Youth Stabilization Specialist**, who will be focused on prevention and diversion. This Specialist will counsel youth, families, and services providers about available community resources to assist families, coordinate connection to services and financial assistance that may assist youth to stay, return home, or identify friends or family for long-term support. The Specialist will assess youth and their families, both to determine whether a youth will be safe if he or she remains at home, and also to determine the level of support needed for the youth to achieve housing stability. While there are youth who *must* leave home for safety reasons, there are also situations where counseling or financial assistance or both may make it possible for a youth to remain with parents or live with other family members or adults who will take them in (such as parents of friends). The Youth Stabilization Coordinator will have access to a pool of **flexible funds** to support preservation of existing housing situations. The Specialist will assist families in accessing family counseling.

For youth already living on their own, particularly those who are older, the Youth Stabilization Specialist will be able to provide homelessness prevention funds to pay arrears and avoid eviction.

Diversion Plan The **Youth Stabilization Specialist** will support diversion for youth newly leaving home, by providing the same portfolio of services, aimed at returning youth home or assisting youth to identify an alternate long-term housing option. The component of diversion will also include **Kinship Care**, which is the existence of short-term (no more than a month) placement of youth in a contracted-for home. While all youth will not accept this type of placement, the Hampden County CoC's past experience is that this is a helpful model for avoidance of homelessness for a subset of the youth population, especially those 18-21. The short-term stay provides a period of time to work with the family and also with other familiar adults to determine if there is a long-term housing option. Where there is no long-term option available, the time allows for a youth to rent a unit on their own, using rapid rehousing funds. The CoC does not currently have any provider offering Kinship Care for youth 18 or older.

Rapid Rehousing Plan A **Youth Rehousing Specialist** will assist youth in shelter to access housing and support services. This specialist be located at or have a regular presence at the region's largest shelter, Friends of the Homeless Resource Center, and the DHCD Intake office, and will bring a youth-centered specialty and training to rehousing work at this locations.

The Plan will test several types of rehousing. Some youth will access housing in a cluster of units rented, at least initially, by the rehousing provider. These may include roommate situations, and may have services located close to the housing. Other youth will be provided rental assistance to obtain their own unit, which will likely be a distance from services; it is expected that these youth will be more independent and use services less frequently. All youth will be offered services using a Housing First model, and with services offered at their residence. Youth will be provided with 12 month's rapid rehousing rental assistance.

Employment and Education The EOHHS-funded housing programs will use the model of Secure Jobs, which has been used with success with homeless families, to focus on both housing and employment/education at the same time for all youth served in the program. Support staff will specifically seek to address barriers to both housing stability and to connection to education/employment. The overall program will partner closely with the Workforce Investment Act youth employment providers, training opportunities available through the Regional Employment Board, and the community colleges.

Program Administration

Subcontractors The CoC will contract with one to three experienced providers to operate the youth housing stabilization, diversion, and rapid rehousing programs. These agencies will be selected through a request for proposal (RFP) process that will be completed prior to the Commonwealth's grant start date. In selecting subcontractors, the CoC will require experience serving youth, accessing mainstream benefits, evaluating and providing trauma-informed care and referrals, capacity to access education and workforce development resources, training of counselors in youth services, capacity to provide youth-centered assessment and triage with a focus on trauma-informed care, and identification of mentoring and nurturing adult opportunities. The CoC is familiar with providers in Hampden County that have these competencies.

Technical Assistance and Training Because more than 750 youth a year access adult shelters in Hampden County, the CoC recognizes the need to bring technical assistance and training to staff working in the adult system. In addition to the Youth Rehousing Specialist working alongside adult shelter workers, the Specialist will also coordinate a number of trainings for CoC staff—using CoC resources. The trainings shall encompass trauma-informed care, engagement of youth, human trafficking, and assessment. The CoC has recently begun using the Transition-Age-Youth Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Assessment Tool (TAY-VI-SPDAT), and the Youth Stabilization Specialist and Youth Rehousing Specialist will help determine the value of the tool, and if the tool is adopted by the full CoC, provide training in use of the tool. The Specialist will be testing the combination of the tool with the variety of youth interventions the CoC will have available, and will begin to understand the value of the tool in determining the right fit for services.

Measuring Success: Data Collection and Reporting

All agencies participating in this initiative will be required to record data about households assisted in the CoC's HMIS, which will be able to report on the numbers and characteristics of households that receive assistance. The CoC shall use the following measures of success:

- Creation of a network of coordinated youth services which are well-known to a network of at least 25 youth-serving community agencies throughout Hampden County
- Testing of the TAY-VI-SPDAT, determining the value of broad use of the tool, and identifying matches between scores and appropriate intervention
- If the TAY-VI-SPDAT is retained, creation of policies and procedures for assessing youth and matching with appropriate services

- If funded at the level of \$600,000 per year, the CoC will provide:
 - The existence of youth stabilization coordination which will serve 50 youth per year
 - Prevention financial assistance, which will assist 20 youth per year
 - Kinship Care for 24 youth per year
 - Assessment, housing search and rehousing assistance for 50 youth per year
 - Rapid rehousing financial assistance, which will provide 12 months' rental payments and supportive services for 24 youth per year

Schedule

Select and Engage Youth Service Provider(s)	
Advertise RFP for Youth Services Provider(s)	Feb. 3, 2016
Release RFP for Youth Services Provider(s)	Feb. 8, 2016
Deadline for RFP responses	Mar. 4, 2016
Selection of Youth Services Provider(s)	Mar. 10, 2016
Enter Subcontract(s) with Youth Services Provider(s)	By Mar. 30, 2016
Program Start-Up Activities	
Youth Provider(s) hire staff	By May 15, 2016
Youth Providers identify Kinship Care providers and housing units	By May 15, 2016
Program Initiation	
Youth Stabilization Specialist and Rehousing Specialist begin	May 15, 2016
Flexible Funds available	May 15, 2016
Kinship Care available	May 15, 2016
Outreach to Consortium Members	
Create education materials about CE and flexible funds	April 30, 2016
Provide outreach and training for consortium members	May 15, 2016 and continuing