

RICHLAND COUNTY
CORONAVIRUS AD HOC COMMITTEE

AGENDA

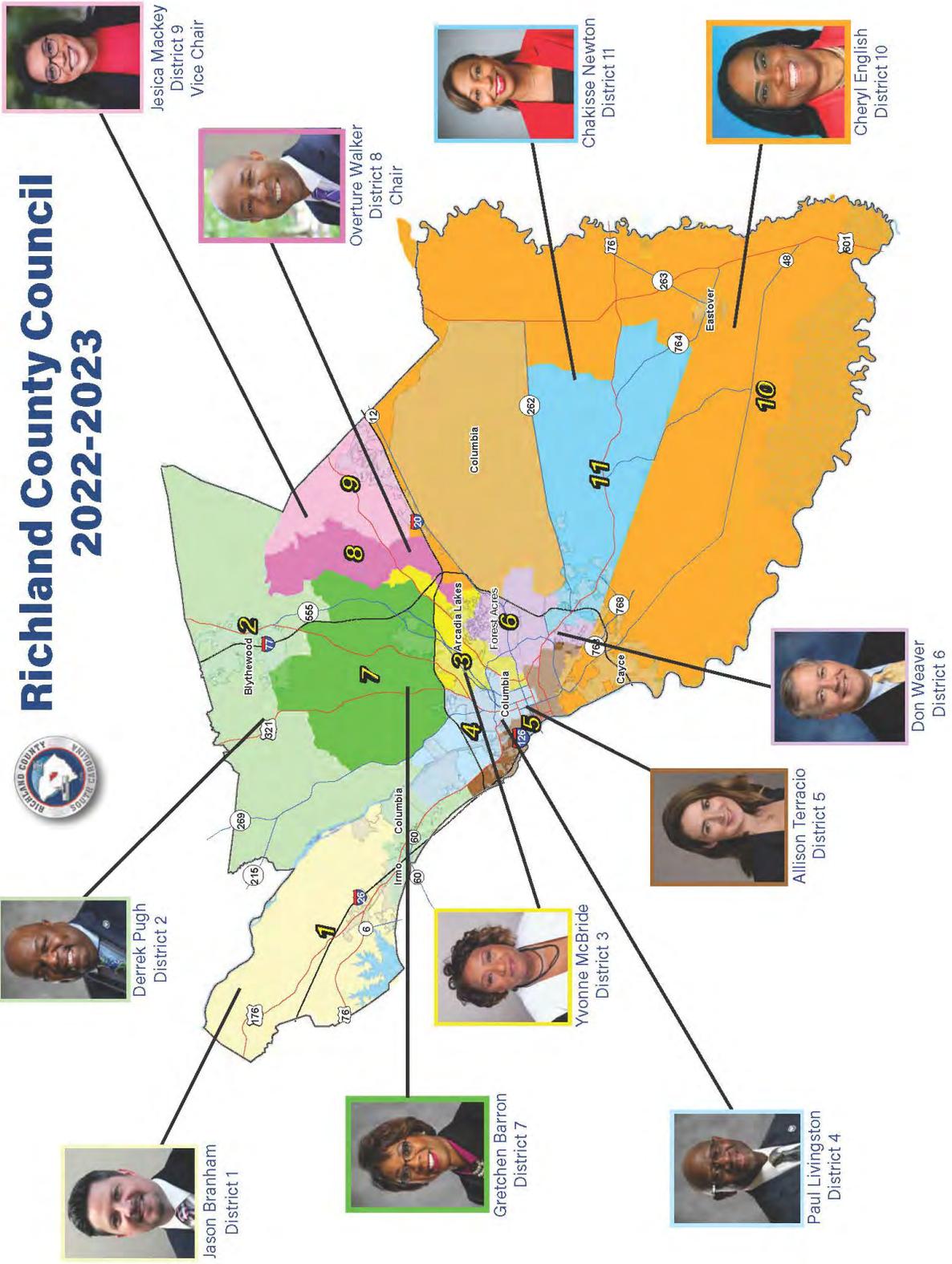


TUESDAY MAY 16, 2023

1:30 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Richland County Council 2022-2023





**Richland County
Coronavirus Ad Hoc Committee**

AGENDA

May 16, 2023 - 1:30 PM
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

The Honorable Jason Branham County Council District 1	The Honorable Gretchen Barron, Chair County Council District 7	The Honorable Chakisse Newton County Council District 11
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- 1. **Call to Order** The Honorable Gretchen Barron

- 2. **Approval of Minutes** The Honorable Gretchen Barron
 - a. April 5, 2023 [\[PAGES 5-12\]](#)

- 3. **Adoption of Agenda** The Honorable Gretchen Barron

- 4. **Items for Discussion/Action** The Honorable Gretchen Barron
 - a. American Rescue Plan Application Review and Recommendation:
 - 1. Senior Assistance
 - 2. Unhoused Persons Categories
 - b. Staff Updates:
 - 1. Affordable Housing
 - 2. Desk Reviews [\[PAGES 13-43\]](#)

- 5. **Adjournment** The Honorable Gretchen Barron



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Richland County Council
Coronavirus AD Hoc Committee Meeting
MINUTES
April 5, 2023 – 2:00 PM
Council Chambers
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Gretchen Barron, Chair; Jason Branham, and Chakisse Newton.

OTHERS PRESENT: Paul Livingston, Allison Terracio, Sarah Harris, Chelsea Bennett, Dante Roberts, Michelle Onley, Ashiya Myers, Stacey Hamm, Dale Welch, Lori Thomas, Leonardo Brown, Angela Weathersby, Anette Kirylo, Kyle Holsclaw, Nadia Rutherford, and Susan O’Cain.

CALL TO ORDER – Chairwoman Gretchen Barron called the meeting to order at approximately 2:03 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. February 14, 2023 – Mr. Branham moved to approve the minutes as distributed, seconded by Ms. Newton
In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton
The vote in favor was unanimous.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – Ms. Newton moved to adopt the agenda as published, seconded by Mr. Branham.

In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton
The vote in favor was unanimous.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION

- a. American Rescue Plan Application Request, Review, and Recommendation

Ms. Barron noted Councilmembers had an opportunity to review the applicants and applications in detail. The goal today is to take each category up separately. She understands there is a list and many things to address. She indicated she was okay with forwarding one or two committee recommendations to Council and reconvening the committee to continue the work. She would like to move something out of committee today, but moreover, she wants to be a good steward of the funds the Federal government has provided us. She noted it had been a big task, and the Richland County citizens have been awaiting these much-needed dollars.

Mr. Leonardo Brown, County Administrator, stated we are at the stage where it is in the committee’s hands to utilize the information provided through the third-party process. What is before the committee is the applications and the information that was vetted. The request is for the committee to consider which programs to fund.

- BROADBAND – Ms. Barron stated the State had provided an exorbitant amount of money to go into broadband. At this point, we need to determine if we are providing duplicate funds for the same services.

Ms. Newton noted since we accepted these applications, there has been a significant amount of investment in broadband, and those dollars are continuing to roll in. Among those dollars is a household-by-household credit for internet services, which will be available to everyone. She spoke with the State Director of Broadband to determine where we could make the most significant impact. A recommendation was to look at organizations that are community anchors (i.e., libraries and schools), those organizations would serve a broader geographic area across the County. Based on that, she would recommend the Richland Library Program, which gives us geographic diversity across the County. It has a track record of lending things to people. She would also look at Columbia International University. It serves a smaller geographic area but falls into the community anchor category.

Coronavirus Ad Hoc Committee
April 5, 2023

Mr. Branham stated library programs were likely strong candidates for funds in this category. He noted he was looking at the Recreation Commission's program and there seem to be quality objectives, the program appears to be new.

Mr. Livingston stated the State and Federal funding seemed to be more toward broadband infrastructure. He noted he believes we need to look at those geared more toward services instead of infrastructure.

Ms. Barron stated she would like to see additional hot spots. At a glance, many of the applicants we have recommended have already received some funds. At this point, she is leery of supplanting. She suggests that we look closely at a couple of the organizations. She wants staff to know that when we do the desk review, all unallowable costs are backed out so that people understand that even if they see \$800,000 does not mean they will get that amount.

Ms. Newton requested an explanation of how the desk review will work.

Assistant County Administrator, Lori Thomas, stated the third-party vendor would sit down with the applicant to understand further their budget and the actual use of funds to determine which funds are applicable and which may be questionable.

Ms. Newton inquired if the desk review would occur before the committee recommendation is forwarded to Council. She feels there is additional information that would be helpful for the whole body, but she does not want us to violate any best practices or be unnecessarily duplicative.

Ms. Sarah Harris, Grants Director, stated that we would have a good idea of which applicants would be awarded. We would take the information and look in the background to obtain the additional preliminary information needed. If you are going through your review and have questions, we could provide them to the applicants to vet some of those processes.

Ms. Newton noted that the desk review could be done either way.

Mr. Brown stated if the committee is going to vet the potential recipients and then forward them to Council, what would happen if Council's view is different? He wants to make sure how we allow the committee to make their recommendations does not step on the toes of Council.

Ms. Newton indicated the more she looked, the more questions she had. She was thinking if we take our recommendations to Council, will it pause there?

Ms. Barron stated she thinks it is to our advantage to decide on what we are recommending. If there are some details in the budget of the organizations that give us heartburn, make those recommendations in committee, and then equip staff with our full recommendation for them to do their desk review and bring back the information as a part of our recommendation to full Council.

Ms. Newton moved to forward to Council a recommendation to approve funding for Columbia International University and Richland Library, seconded by Ms. Barron.

In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- **AFFORDABLE HOUSING** – Ms. Barron stated there was some conversation about the expectations of the committee and Council and what we received. She noted that with these housing projects, we are looking at applicants requesting funds to purchase land and build within the timeframe. Now that she has set with the applications, there is a concern that any of the projects can get off the ground, implemented, and have all the steps completed within our time period. We had applicants marked at a higher risk for the County because their projects would not be completed within the time period. When we look at the applications we have set forth and the ones that may have been eliminated, she thinks they are all in the same category. She wants us to be able to support affordable housing, but when we look at this pot of money, we do have constraints on how we need to move forward when we are awarding these dollars. She does not want us to award dollars that we know will not be able to meet the deadline.

Mr. Branham stated the consultant expressed there were additional restrictions related to the spending of these funds to purchase property.

Ms. Thomas indicated there is a concern with acquiring property and transferring that property to another individual. You go from sub-recipient to beneficiary, and

who determines the beneficiary? With these funds, there would be quite a few guidelines the Federal government would impose on those. As Ms. Barron pointed out, some of the other applications did not meet the risk threshold because we would be at risk of not completing the projects and potentially putting the loss of funds at risk.

Mr. Branham stated from what he sees in the notes on the grants, none of them risk the acquisition of property as part of the proposal.

Ms. Thomas responded in the affirmative. These applicants proposed some sort of service. The concern from the work session was that it was not adding additional units.

Ms. Newton stated she wants to ensure we adhere carefully to the Federal guidelines and only do things for which we will be reimbursed. Her desire and thoughts, when we approve these dollars, is that we would increase the number of units. She noted \$4M would not increase the

number tremendously because that amount does not get you what it used to. There was a time when Mr. Brown mentioned there might be alternate structures we could look at to achieve the goal. For example, do we say we will allocate funds from the General Fund in this amount where we have greater control and can influence affordable housing units and do something with the guidelines with the ARPA dollars? For her, that is what she would like to explore. She does not know that it has been thought through enough where we can direct the Administrator to go forth, but where there is a motion to request a proposal on how to achieve that. The applicants we have before us are worthy of funding, but she would not recommend funding any of these projects but investigating some alternate way to put the same number of dollars into increasing the number of units. She also noted that Richland County has already expended millions of dollars for some of these services (i.e., rental assistance) but has not addressed increasing the number of units.

Mr. Livingston noted what he had hoped when we started talking about affordable housing: we could use these funds to develop a housing trust fund and to be able to leverage these funds with private funds and grants. If there is any creative way we can realize these funds and this process to engage and start a housing trust fund, it would be great.

Ms. Barron indicated the goal was increasing the number of houses or the workforce market. A lot of it has come through community advocates like More Justice. Council finds this important, which is why we allotted the \$4M. For us to be true to the process, or intent, she would like us to devise creative ways to do what we set out to do, whether Council desires to create a housing trust or help to fund one. This is the largest pot of money Council set aside. This was our biggest investment, and we have to get it right.

Mr. Brown stated that if the committee desires to do that, they should articulate that so it can be captured as a part of their motion. Whoever makes the motion should direct the Administrator to provide a mechanism or process allowing \$4M allocated through ARPA funds to be dollar-for-dollar exchanged, where possible, with General Fund dollars to an affordable housing trust fund. The idea is that whatever funds you want to utilize to pursue the affordable housing trust fund potentially would be exchanged for General Fund dollars. We would utilize the ARPA funds in other areas and allow you the flexibility to do what you want to do to add affordable housing units. He wants to ensure you do not think it would be these dollars plus General Fund dollars because that is not something we could sustain.

Mr. Branham inquired if we could identify funds that had been appropriated for something that would qualify for ARPA funds and be able to switch that out in a targeted way so the \$4M is not floating there open-ended, but that it has to be spent within an ARPA timeframe, and on an ARPA qualifying purpose.

Mr. Brown stated we have a portion of the ARP dollars that are considered to fall under the loss revenue column. The loss revenue column allows for those that are under the umbrella but they do not have a specified use. We want to ensure the funds we use in the loss revenue column are applicable projects. The loss revenue column is general and allows for more flexibility for the County so that we have more access to do that, but the sources will be items the County has identified as priorities. We do not want to tailor it too narrowly, so you reduce the ability to meet the threshold for the \$4M.

Mr. Branham stated he fully supports maximizing the value of the \$4M to expand available, affordable housing units. He wanted to ensure we were not consequently expanding the budget.

Mr. Brown noted we would not be creating any additional uses that have not already been considered in the recommended budget for the purpose of the General Fund and ARPA dollars exchange.

Ms. Terracio stated she is not sure she would want to limit the motion to just the trust fund but rather be able to explore the mechanisms that would best serve the County.

Ms. Newton indicated there had been a lot of confusion about the way trust funds work, and that may not be the vehicle that achieves the goal. There may be applications that were not considered because they were deemed riskier because of the land acquisition process. She does not think we should rule out the applications that were vetted but a slight altering of the rubric.

Mr. Brown noted if there is a motion that allows for the exchange so that General Fund dollars become the dollars that are used, and you talk about the myriad options, you want to consider, you then would come back to address those applications.

Ms. Barron stated we need to be clear in the motion what our options are. If that is to explore housing trust or prioritize those applications we already have on file, that is where we need to start. She noted our being vague during this process has now come back to us. She does not want this to come back to us, but be specific in what we ask for.

Mr. Branham noted it appeared when the Greenville Housing Fund's application was submitted the fund did not yet own the 200-unit affordable housing complex. The application was submitted with the contemplation of acquiring it and replacing the roof. He indicated it sounded like it would be new affordable housing units.

Ms. Thomas responded the units already existed.

Mr. Branham inquired if the Greenville Housing Fund currently owns them.

Ms. Thomas replied she did not know, which was the contemplation.

For clarification, Mr. Branham stated that the units already exist as affordable housing.

Ms. Thomas responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Terracio stated she hoped that this body could allocate funds to improve the living conditions for those individuals residing in these units. In essence, we would create new units and improve the living conditions of existing affordable housing units.

For clarification, Ms. Barron stated Ms. Terracio supports additional affordable housing and repairs.

Ms. Terracio replied in the affirmative. She indicated her understanding is that we are not just creating new units but also making units livable. She also would not like to exclude the option of working with entities that have come before us, perhaps just not in this particular way.

Ms. Barron stated she believes this category intended to create additional housing, which is where the challenge comes in with the existing list. If the body would like to include that in the motion, then most definitely.

Mr. Livingston noted he is concerned that if we focus on repairing units, we will not get any new ones. He suggested splitting the funding for new and vacated units, so we will know it is an available unit that is not presently being used.

Ms. Newton stated that the goal for her is new units, not repairing or alleviating existing ones. She advocates for stronger regulations so that can happen through the appropriate channels.

Mr. Brown indicated the language staff is providing will allow us to comply with the American Rescue Plan Act dollars use and also address what the committee is asking to potentially do to utilize dollars to address the specific need under affordable housing.

Ms. Thomas stated the intent here is for Council to invest \$4M in affordable housing. Perhaps the motion could be to direct the Administrator to propose a plan to invest \$4M in affordable housing...in new units, etc. Staff could then bring forward a plan showing the funding mechanisms.

Ms. Barron moved to direct the Administrator to propose a plan to invest \$4M into affordable housing by adding new and/or vacated units.

Ms. Newton inquired about what a vacated unit is.

Mr. Livingston noted we have abandoned apartment units that could be made available for individuals who do not have a home.

Ms. Newton stated, for clarification, if no one is using it and then it becomes an affordable housing unit, it would be a new affordable housing unit without the need to specify that it was vacated.

Mr. Livingston stated that some people may not say it is a new unit.

For clarification, Ms. Terracio noted we are not just limiting the new units to new construction.

Ms. Newton moved to direct the Administrator to propose a plan to invest \$4M in affordable housing, specifically to add new affordable housing units to the market, seconded by Mr. Branham.

In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- YOUTH AND RECREATIONAL SERVICES – Ms. Barron stated it was a stretch for her on one or two of the applications and whether they are in the correct category. She noted there is a lot of personnel included in it. It concerns her whether the listed personnel will be 100% for the projects or if we are funding additional personnel doing other tasks. As she mentioned in the work session, the intent was not to create new positions that will go away when the funding goes away, negatively impacting the community.

Ms. Newton stated that similar to affordable housing, where the proposals that were ranked the highest did not correspond to the vision for the service, youth and recreation services falls here. She advocated and increased the funds to \$1M because the youth in the community needs so much right now. We were going to provide services and recreation to young people to help them get off the streets. There are some proposals where the closest they get to youth is that they were young at some point, which is not what we are trying to do. She does not feel good about allocating the funds here and it does not fill the intent of what she was recommending. She would be willing to discuss the proposal from the Midlands Mediation Center because that proposal is about training an army of volunteers who can go out into the community and teach people conflict resolution skills. She has experience helping to support narrative mediation training for youth, and she was able to see how they interacted with people differently. Some of these people's long-standing conflicts were resolved on the spot. Even though this is not what she had in mind, she would like to discuss this proposal because our people need to know how to handle conflict better. Regarding the other grant proposals, she is not in a position to support them because she does not feel like it does the intent of what she advocated for.

Mr. Branham stated that the spirit of the Able SC application is wonderful, but at the same time, so much of the funds are proposed for salaries for new positions.

Ms. Newton acknowledged these are excellent organizations, and her comments in no way imply the work they are proposing is not noble work or organizations but does not meet the intent or spirit of which she was advocating for funds.

Ms. Barron noted she is a big fan of the Big Red Barn. The work they are doing for first responders and veterans is amazing. Her concern is that this category is for youth and recreation, and she does not think this application is in the proper location. She indicated she could support the Healthy Learners, although their application is salary heavy. Therefore, she cannot support their application as submitted. If an organization is not in the proper location, she would like us to entertain moving the entity to a more appropriate area. For the record, she can support Healthy Learners, Able SC, and Midlands Mediation Center.

Mr. Livingston inquired if we could use these funds for a comprehensive summer job program which he knows the youth will benefit from.

Ms. Barron noted she believes that was the intent. We were talking about parks, activities, and things for the youth to do. What this body has to determine is if there is money left over after we allocate the funds, what do we do with the residual funds? It could be that we have another look at the applications on file or have a blank motion that says all leftover funding goes to a particular place.

Mr. Brown indicated, in some instances, applicants did not put down a particular category. If there was someone you wanted to look at funding and send to the desk review process, you certainly could do that. In addition, many people may have applied under non-profit, and the third-party review determined it was an ineligible use, so they attempted to find the next best place for the application to go so it would not get lost.

Ms. Newton stated Mr. Brown's statement concerns her a lot. She would like clarity on whether the categories we are looking at represent categories selected by applicants or a third party. She noted we are here evaluating specific buckets, so to say we are going to move funding from this bucket to the other bucket may mean that a bucket where there is enough funding for everybody now becomes a bucket where there is not enough funding or alter previous recommendations. She was operating under the assumption that people put themselves in this category. If they put themselves in that category, then it is one thing to say we asked for "apples," and you are a "cumquat."

Mr. Brown stated early on we discussed that one of the reasons why it took so long for the reviews is because, in some incidences, people did not select a category.

Ms. Newton stated, at least with the organizations that have been put forward, to understand if they put themselves in the category. For her, that affects how she moves forward. Secondly, she will be prepared, at the appropriate time, to make a motion for what to do with categories where we do not expend all the funds. Because of how far we are off the mark with youth and recreation services, she would like to put it aside. For the other categories, she would like to apply any unallocated funds to the DSS facility.

Ms. Newton moved to forward a recommendation to Council to fund the Midlands Mediation Center and reserve the remaining funds in the Youth and Recreation Services category to be allocated at a later date as consistent with the Federal ARPA guidelines.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. Branham stated he sees violence prevention, crime reduction, and community relations specifically targeting young people as valid, but so much of the funding relates to salaries. He understands that people's time is the essence of the project, but he understood a small amount would go toward rental spaces for listening and mediation sessions. He would like to support it but cannot at this level.

Ms. Barron reminded the committee there is still the desk review. Based on her expertise in grants, many of them will not receive full funding.

Ms. Newton noted that if you are training volunteers, someone has to train them, which is how she looked at it. The way we have been approaching this is to make a motion to approve something and send it to Council. She inquired if there was an opportunity, since we have more questions about a particular application, to have someone talk with the applicant and get more information.

Mr. Brown stated to the extent that you were considering their application for potential funding, getting clarity from them that only they can provide would be reasonable.

Ms. Newton inquired if it would be most appropriate to table this and gave more directive questions to Administration so they could be specifically asked.

Ms. Barron indicated we could direct staff to ask whatever questions we have and bring it back to the committee before we make a recommendation.

Ms. Newton noted she does not know if she has enough questions about other groups to slow down the process.

Mr. Branham stated he was content with tabling this item. We have shared some prevailing concerns that have commonality across applications. With a little time, we may be able to provide additional guidance or set a policy that relates to salaries.

Ms. Barron stated if we are going to move forward, we need to be specific about what we are requesting staff to do.

Ms. Newton inquired if we are talking about all categories.

Ms. Barron responded she was specifically referring to the Youth and Recreation Services category.

Ms. Newton suggested sending specific questions to staff by the end of the week.

- SENIOR ASSISTANCE – Ms. Barron stated the only comment she has regarding this category is that it is slightly over our amount.

Ms. Newton noted she might need to take a slightly different look at how the expenditures shake out as we look at some of the staffing concerns. She noted they seemed like worthy projects and was inclined to consider splitting the funding. As it related to SC UpLift, she was curious about their approach to geographic diversity. She thinks there are people across the county that need assistance. Some people are harder to reach than others. To invest this level of funding, she would like to understand how they will approach hitting people in all parts of the county.

Ms. Barron stated she must recuse herself from this category because she works with the SC Community Action Partnership.

- NON-PROFITS – Ms. Barron noted the Community Relations Council, the Lourie Center, and Palmetto AIDS Life Support Services have already received ARPA funds. We are specifically looking at premium pay for Cooperative Ministries, Columbia City Ballet, Epworth Children's Home, and Midlands Mediation Center. She noted several applications were heavy in salaries. Her biggest concern with this category is the applications requesting funds for employee salaries. She does not believe that the intent of this body is to pay 100% of salaries for employees, and she would not support paying salaries out of these funds.

Ms. Newton indicated one of the areas she was curious about is that one of the applications is specifically for pandemic premium pay. She inquired if this was one that Ms. Barron would look less favorably on.

Ms. Barron replied she believes this application is different. She noted Council has already set forth premium pay for County staff. When speaking of salaries, she is talking about us paying the entire salary, and it is not COVID-related.

Ms. Newton stated this is a category where we said you are a non-profit would you like help that meets the ARPA guidelines. She inquired as to how many organizations applied for the non-profit category.

Ms. Thomas will provide that information at a later date.

Ms. Newton stated she felt comfortable with the good work the Cooperative Ministry and Epworth Children's Home have been doing. She indicated she could support parts of the Midlands Mediation Center but would be curious about some of the assertions made in their application. She noted she struggled with the Columbia City Ballet's application.

Mr. Livingston stated he was concerned about the amount for marketing. He indicated he was okay with the Midlands Mediation Center application.

Ms. Barron noted she had some challenges with the ballet and the amount of funding they requested. She knows COVID negatively impacted the ballet, but she is not sure it is 100% our responsibility to supplement or fulfill the salary request. She stated she supported the other entities' requests.

Ms. Newton mentioned so much was in the ballet's application, and she had questions and concerns in many places. She did not feel she could back out a number for even partial funding.

Ms. Barron suggested directing staff to have a conversation with the Columbia City Ballet before making a recommendation to Council.

Ms. Newton inquired if Ms. Barron is suggesting to keep this item in committee and send along questions or to send recommendations to Council and provide additional questions.

Ms. Barron responded to send recommendations to Council and provide additional questions.

Ms. Newton moved to forward to Council a recommendation to fund the Cooperative Ministry, Epworth Children's Home, and Midlands Mediation Center. In addition, any questions the committee has regarding the Columbia City Ballet be sent to staff for them to provide answers. Ms. Barron seconded the motion.

In Favor: Barron and Newton

Not Present: Branham

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- FOOD INSECURITY – Ms. Barron mentioned that Senior Resources has already received \$548,046 in funding, which leaves us with \$1.4M. She noted this particular category was one of those that it appeared there could be supplanting. It appeared the funds may not be used for

new projects or expansion of existing projects but to replace existing funds. If we fund these organizations, and that is the case, it exposes the County to liability.

Ms. Newton inquired if the application in the packet from Senior Resources is in addition to all the other funding or are we subtracting.

Mr. Brown responded this particular request is an additional ask. If you look on the "Food Insecurity Grants" page, the \$548,046 was approved during the previous budget process. This particular request has not been approved.

For clarification, Ms. Newton stated Senior Resources would be requesting the \$500,000 plus the \$800,000.

Mr. Brown replied the \$548,046 would have already been received, so technically, they are not asking again.

Ms. Newton clarified that Senior Resources is making an additional request for \$800,000, separate and apart from the previous allocation.

Ms. Barron stated that, to that point, it is an additional ask for the same program.

Ms. Thomas noted the funds allocated during the budget process in June 2022 were for the fiscal year July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023. If you look in the application, they are requesting to fund July 1, 2023, through December 31, 2024.

Ms. Newton inquired if Ms. Thomas had any information about any other applications Senior Resources has made or plans to make as we enter the new budget cycle.

Ms. Thomas does not recall if they have received a request from them. Additionally, if they were to apply for Community Impact funding, that application process has yet to begin.

Ms. Newton inquired if the Community Impact Grants would be the most appropriate vehicle that Senior Resources might use to apply for additional funding.

Ms. Thomas responded that would be her understanding.

Ms. Newton stated it was her understanding, at the last Community Impact Grants meeting, there was a motion made that some organizations would be granted line item status in the budget. She inquired if that was a correct representation.

Mr. Brown indicated the wording used was that they would not have to go through a competitive proceeding to receive funds the County allocates.

Ms. Newton remarked it was her understanding that 9-10 organizations where they would not have to go through the competitive funding process and that Senior Resources was one of those organizations.

Mr. Brown responded that the Clerk's Office signified that is correct.

Ms. Newton noted as we look at the requests made for this category, there were more requests than we could fund. If we wanted to support everyone at their requested level, an additional \$487,000 would be needed. She mentioned because this is a budget item, she expressed concerns that they are requesting funds from this bucket and potentially receiving funds from another grant source. Also, she echoed Ms. Barron's concerns about us supplanting instead of being additive. The intent was to expand the reach. For example, she noted she worked with a group of non-profits that received funding from a grant organization, and their motto was "but for Acme." When they funded people, it was because the non-profit could not have reached the additional height "but for Acme." She indicated that is what she wants to see, not the County paying for something the entity is already doing.

Mr. Livingston stated there is no direct funding for the agencies the Community Impact Grant Committee recommended.

With respect to the Community Impact Grants, Ms. Barron stated these are "Friends of Richland County." As these are "Friends of Richland County," they are now in this group that does not have to go through the competitive process when going through the budget cycle. The budget cycle will determine if they receive \$2 or \$5. It is her understanding the committee could make a recommendation or specific Councilmembers can make motions, as in the past. She noted given the hour; she would request putting a "pin" in the discussion. If there are any questions regarding these categories, forward those questions to Ms. Thomas by next Wednesday, April 12th. During this time, we request Ms. Thomas contact the entities and pose Councilmembers' questions.

Ms. Newton inquired if it was possible and appropriate for the organizations we recommend to be forwarded to Council to submit a short abstract summarizing their project. She noted some of the organizations did a better job than others in explaining their project.

Ms. Barron indicated that Ms. McBride and another Councilmember had similar concerns and mentioned an abstract.

Ms. Harris replied this is a part of the pre-eligibility process, so nothing has been set in stone, so we can certainly reach out and request an abstract.

Ms. Newton expanded her request for an abstract to any project still under consideration.

Ms. Barron inquired when Ms. Newton would like to receive the abstracts. She mentioned this could be confusing if we send some recommendations through with abstracts and could also further delay the process. If we request the Grants Team to request this pre-eligibility document, we also need to be specific about when we want it back and what process we want it to be linked to.

Ms. Newton stated her intent is not to slow down the process and is open to suggestions about the timeframe. In terms of the organizations she is including, she is including all organizations currently under consideration by Council. She would be willing to exclude those organizations in categories where we have already made recommendations. Regarding the timeline, she will rely on the Grants Office to make a reasonable suggestion.

Mr. Brown indicated they could make the request, but they are depending on the organizations to respond. What is reasonable to us may not fit their schedules.

Mr. Livingston inquired if we have an anticipated timeframe.

Ms. Barron responded we do not have an established timeframe, but she made a note to do so.

Mr. Livingston noted this process has been overwhelming. In hindsight, it might have been helpful if we had taken up a couple of categories at a time.

Ms. Barron responded that was the goal today, but that could have been communicated before the meeting.

Ms. Newton inquired, based on where we are in the schedule, when would the recommendations made at today's meeting be on a Council agenda.

Ms. Anette Kirylo, Clerk to Council, responded the motions will go to the April 18th Council meeting.

Ms. Harris stated the Grants Office will do what it can to get the answers back as soon as possible.

Ms. Newton suggested prioritizing the organizations we will discuss at the next committee meeting. In terms of a method, we have often received supplemental documentation by email. The organizations being recommended for funding on April 18th may be inclined to return their information in a timely manner.

Ms. Barron noted that when we communicate with the organizations, we are specific in our requests and let them know they cannot move forward without the requested information. She inquired if requesting this information would require a motion by this body.

Mr. Wright responded he did not believe so. You are requesting specific information; therefore, Administration could do that.

Ms. Barron stated that moving forward, we will request additional information from a couple of groups. In addition, at a later date, we will request those entities included in the binder to submit an abstract. If there are any questions regarding a specific applicant, forward your questions to Ms. Thomas by April 12th. She mentioned that she would be creating a timeline so that we can continue this process.

ADJOURNMENT – Ms. Newton moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Barron.

In Favor: Barron and Newton

Not Present: Branham

The vote in favor was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:03 PM.



Richland County ARPA Grant Abstracts

Coronavirus Ad Hoc Committee
Pre-Eligibility Additional Reviews
April 16, 2023

Senior Assistance

SC Uplift

SC Uplift Community Outreach is a community development corporation founded in 2008 that nurtures human potential by offering educational, economic, and health programs. Our primary focus is helping people improve their quality of life through safe, secure and affordable housing and employment services. Seniors are one America's most valuable resources, yet they are often the most neglected and underserved. SC Uplift, which has been recognized for its innovation in senior living, understands the needs of the community and will bring its expertise and passion to directly serve Richland County seniors. We will implement the Richland County Senior Home Repair Program to address the growing demand for home and emergency repairs. The Richland County Senior Home Repair Program will focus on providing home repairs and emergency repairs for seniors, 62 years and older, in owner-occupied, low-to-moderate income households (at or below 80% of area median income) who primarily live in Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) within the zip codes of 29203, 29204, and 29223 and other Qualified Census Tracts of Richland County, as funding allows. Home and emergency repairs that will be covered under the Program include repair or replacement of roofs, HVAC units, water heaters, plumbing, etc. for owner-occupied homes. Repairs and replacements will be limited to \$10,000 per senior household. The \$10,000 will cover the costs of supplies and the labor of licensed, bonded contractors (e.g., roofers, general contractors, HVAC professional, et al.).

SCACAP-SC Association of Community Action Partnerships

The Alston Wilkes Society (AWS), which has been providing offender reentry services in Richland County for the past 61 years, is requesting \$320,000 over 2 years to enhance its existing Midlands reentry program with provision of housing supports to a projected (75) former offender households. Securing appropriate housing is a major reentry challenge in Richland County and these funds will increase housing stability through direct financial assistance, leading to permanent housing. Based on reentry best practices, these households will be provided with assistance in identifying appropriate housing options, housing stability case management (e.g., working on a budget, etc.) and direct financial assistance with costs such as housing application fees, security deposits, first month's rent, and utility deposits. In many cases, we project that clients will be in the process of becoming employed and simply not have the resources to even begin to think about paying for such "start-up" expenses. They need a chance to earn one or two paychecks to be able to secure and maintain housing. \$300,000 of the requested funds will be allocated to financial assistance with housing, while \$20,000 will be allocated to a part-time project assistant to provide administrative support. AWS' program is proud to report a nominal 6% recidivism rate among its former offender clients which is very positive in light of the 20% state average reported by SC Department of Corrections. Thus, a grant awarded to AWS is an



investment in the future well-being and safety of our community. AWS is financially stable, has extensive experience in expending/managing federal funding for housing needs, and has the existing capacity to implement this grant. AWS is also recognized as an American Correctional Association and Council on Accreditation (COA) accredited agency, demonstrating that it adheres the most stringent industry standards in relation to all programming and operations.

Unhoused Persons

Alston Wilkes Society

The Alston Wilkes Society (AWS), which has been providing offender reentry services in Richland County for the past 61 years, is requesting \$320,000 over 2 years to enhance its existing Midlands reentry program with provision of housing supports to a projected (75) former offender households. Securing appropriate housing is a major reentry challenge in Richland County and these funds will increase housing stability through direct financial assistance, leading to permanent housing. Based on reentry best practices, these households will be provided with assistance in identifying appropriate housing options, housing stability case management (e.g., working on a budget, etc.) and direct financial assistance with costs such as housing application fees, security deposits, first month's rent, and utility deposits. In many cases, we project that clients will be in the process of becoming employed and simply not have the resources to even begin to think about paying for such "start-up" expenses. They need a chance to earn one or two paychecks to be able to secure and maintain housing. \$300,000 of the requested funds will be allocated to financial assistance with housing, while \$20,000 will be allocated to a part-time project assistant to provide administrative support. AWS' program is proud to report a nominal 6% recidivism rate among its former offender clients which is very positive in light of the 20% state average reported by SC Department of Corrections. Thus, a grant awarded to AWS is an investment in the future well-being and safety of our community. AWS is financially stable, has extensive experience in expending/managing federal funding for housing needs, and has the existing capacity to implement this grant. AWS is also recognized as an American Correctional Association and Council on Accreditation (COA) accredited agency, demonstrating that it adheres the most stringent industry standards in relation to all programming and operations.

Eddings Help House

Eddings Help House is a Service Recovery & Support Program for Veterans, ReEntry Inmates and Homeless Individuals overcome their criminal thinking patterns, mental health and addiction problems while providing them with shelter to help them transition from homelessness to independent living. Preference is also given to those experiencing crises with regards to the Opiate Epidemic and the unhoused population in the State of South Carolina as we are an organization who utilizes Staff with the same lived experiences.



We are a compassionate organization providing a healthy, trusting and supportive environment to promote and develop self-confidence in a peaceful self-reflective atmosphere. Thus, we provide a variety of group and individual services to each Resident.

Eddings Help House has collaborated with numerous external agencies for referrals and placements to include: SCDC ReEntry Program and ReEmerge Programs, PALSS, Transitions, Christ Central Ministries Lexington Retreat, SC Dept. of Veterans Affairs, SC Vocational Rehabilitation, SC Probation, Pardon and Parole, Prisma Health, Statewide Emergency Rooms, Austin Wilkes Society, Goodwill Pathway Homes, Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous and outreach encounters within the Midlands community and throughout the State of South Carolina. We have gained increased exposure within the community through networking and word of mouth with multiple agencies which gives us the ability to reach more displaced, homeless and disadvantaged individuals.

Midlands Housing Alliance/Transitions

Homelessness is a profound assault on a person's dignity, social inclusion, and self-esteem. On any given night in Richland County, more than 700 individuals find themselves without a nightly residence. Midlands Housing Alliance operates Transitions which offers emergency shelter for 260 individuals every night of the year. Transitions is a campus providing a safe, handicap-accessible environment; 260 beds; meals onsite; a Day Center with hygiene products, showers, restrooms, phone; mail delivery onsite; laundry services; transportation to local agencies; bus tickets for employment and medical appointments; community resource listings and referrals; a courtyard with a community garden; a library with a quiet area; a computer lab with internet access; a clothing closet; a career center; job and financial planning; Homeless Court and legal aid; veterans services; youth services; older adult services; an onsite medical clinic; onsite mental health and substance abuse assistance; housing assistance; outreach in the community; and daily classes for personal development and life skills. The Day Center which is open seven days a week to provide an alternative to the street during the day and to allow homeless individuals an opportunity to obtain services, protection, and a hot lunch. On any given day, over 69 people utilize the Day Center. In FY 2022, 25,089 duplicated individuals used our Day Center, and we served 3139 unique individuals across all programs. Our case managers recognize that homelessness is more than just houselessness. They provide a compassionate approach towards the homeless, whether by taking action to deal with basic needs, or using a 'tough love' to encouraging motivation and independence to help people re-build their lives. This grant will partially fund nineteen employees that are crucial to our operation in addition to shelter operations.

MIRCI-Mental Illness Recovery Center, Inc.

Mirci will address the needs of unhoused adults, youth, and families with children through community-based comprehensive services that reduce barriers to essential services, behavioral healthcare, general healthcare and housing. Services will include outreach, case management, behavioral healthcare, benefits assistance and housing placement. Services will focus on improving health care to reduce



vulnerability to COVID and other poor health conditions. Outreach workers will screen individuals in locations where unhoused people congregate; identify conditions putting them at poor health risk; and distribute items to meet basic needs (food, water, socks, gloves, blankets) and improve hygiene (soap, sanitizer, masks). Clients will be welcomed at Mirci's Outreach Center for health screening, COVID tests, and referrals for physical healthcare and vaccines. The Center offers showers, laundry and light meals. Clients will be screened and treated for mental illness – psychiatry, medication, counseling, and treatment for substance misuse. Benefits specialists will assist clients to apply for SSI, SSDI, SNAP, Medicaid/Medicare, etc. to improve access to healthcare and increase income. Mirci will place people into supportive housing, including its own units. Mirci will expand capacity with the addition of a 10-bedroom home for female youth age 17-22, scheduled to open in spring 2024. The transitional home for females, like Mirci's existing home for male youth, will offer safety, stability, support for mental wellbeing, education, and life skills training. Young unhoused women on the street are especially vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Mirci will track people engaged through outreach; enrolled in behavioral healthcare; assisted with benefits; and entered into housing. Outcomes will include progress on care plans, increases in income, housing stability and reduced emergency and inpatient care (after one-year enrollment). Funds will support nursing, outreach, case management, clinical staff, client assistance, support staff (safety manager, data entry) and staff supervision.

Restoration803

Project Purpose

The economic impact of the pandemic led to lack of income, housing, evictions, job losses, lack of stability and increased homelessness for the last few years. "Pathways Home" project will work towards prevention of factors affecting those experiencing or at risk for homelessness by providing crisis intervention and case management to sustain stabilization. The project will assist in empowering families and individuals to regain and create the sustainability they once had prior to the pandemic. Through "Pathways Home" supportive services to low-income families and individuals in the Columbia Midlands area can meet their goals of obtaining or maintaining permanent housing.

Objectives

The project will utilize its existing case management services through Restoration803's full-time licensed social worker and 2 social work student interns from Winthrop University and Anderson University. Restoration803 currently receives referrals through its relationships with local community agencies through its 24-hour crisis hotline referral number. The emergency crisis services allows for social work staff to provide assessment, case management and support services to those experiencing or at risk for homelessness. Data collection through daily client contact logs and Subject Objective Assessment Plans (S.O.A.P) are methods providing services, assessing the needs of the client, coordinating, monitoring, evaluating and advocating for a package of multi-services to meet the specific client complex needs.

"The Pathway Home" project will provide temporary assistance to low-income families and individuals experiencing an emergency need that cannot be met immediately by their own income, and



resources to help stabilize an immediate financial crisis. The project will aid in emergency assistance with preventing homelessness by helping with rent or transitional housing, referral to emergency shelter, hotel accommodations, rental deposits, utility payments, emergency food distribution and the purchase of city bus passes to provide accessibility to local community agencies.

The Compass CDC

Homelessness and housing instability continue to be pervasive in South Carolina, specifically Richland County. The Compass CDC Transitional Housing Program is designed to provide safe living accommodations to women, children, and men who are financially unable to secure housing due to economic hardship or a life crisis. Our Transitional Housing Program currently operates two homes that accommodate up to 12 adults with or without children. Due to financial difficulties exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic, our organization experienced a decrease in donations and volunteerism causing us to forgo major facility repairs to maintain our utilities and more pertinent operational expenses. Unfortunately, the lack of funds led us to close our homes for major repairs temporarily. Funds secured through this grant would enable us to expedite the completion of our major facility repairs for both houses, such as roof repairs, interior repairs, exterior wood repairs, gutter replacement, and lot clearing for a kid's play area, allowing us to resume providing services to our community by the fourth quarter of this year. Getting assistance to repair our facilities would enable us to direct our current donations toward increasing our services to families and preparing for future facility needs.

Non-Profit Assistance

Columbia City Ballet

Columbia City Ballet has two urgent needs we wish to address through funding from this ARPA grant. While we continue to face multiple challenges related to recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic these are the areas of greatest urgency.

We are desperately in need of funding to increase the effectiveness of our recruitment of professional dance artists. Ballet dancers are scarcer, many of them left the field as a matter of necessity during the pandemic, and therefore the demand for professional dancers has become more competitive than ever before. The costs of recruiting and retaining dance artists have increased exponentially. This funding would enable us to adequately expand our recruitment of dancers through targeted marketing, auditions in larger urban centers with greater concentrations of professional dancers, and increased advertising in leading industry publications, things that are outside our reach without additional funding.

Our second significant challenge is the rejuvenation of our in-person productions of our Educational Outreach & Engagement Series. This important program provided arts education to more than 15,000 SC students in the years preceding the pandemic. It is important to note that, unlike the educational outreach programs of other performing arts groups, our programming is created specifically as educational components, and our productions are coordinated to the SC state standards for arts



education. Our losses in participation are complicated by the fact many of our corporate supporters have shifted their community-giving programs to focus more on health and human services as opposed to the arts. This funding would allow us to increase the marketing of our educational outreach programs as well as initiate other strategies to regain our former participation rates.

Funding from this grant would enable us to focus on these two areas of primary importance to the continued health and sustainability of our organization.

Workforce Training

Alston Wilkes Society

The Alston Wilkes Society (AWS), which has been providing reentry services in Richland County for the past 61 years, is requesting \$80,000 over 2 years to provide employment supports for an estimated (180) former offenders who are trying to rebuild their lives. The requested funds would enhance the existing AWS Midlands Community Service Program's reentry efforts by enabling the Community Service Coordinator to supplement employment assistance with direct financial assistance to remove employment barriers – barriers like revoked drivers licenses requiring expensive reinstatement fees, lack of appropriate clothing (e.g. uniforms, slip resistant shoes, work boots, etc.) and inability to afford required tools or public transportation needed to start a job. A small amount of requested funds (6%) would be allocated to program operating costs such as the hours of financial services staff and the VP of Community Service Programs to administer the grant (set up tracking systems, pull data for reporting, submit required reports, preparing for audits, etc.). Research shows that employment is essential for successful reintegration back into the community after prison, which is evidenced by lower recidivism rates among those that are employed. AWS' program is proud to report a 6% recidivism rate among its former offender clients which is very positive compared to the 20% state average (source: SC Department of Corrections). Thus, a grant awarded to AWS is an investment in the future well-being and safety of our community. AWS is projecting that (100+) clients will secure employment with the support of the requested funds. AWS is financially stable, has extensive experience in expending/managing federal funding, and has existing capacity to implement an ARPA grant. AWS is also recognized as an American Correctional Association and Council on Accreditation (COA) accredited agency, demonstrating that it adheres the most stringent of industry standards in relation to all operations.

Lower Richland Alumni Foundation

Because of the fact that some individuals living in the Lower Richland area are having trouble finding, qualifying, and retaining employment that pays a livable wage, this grant seeks to help coordinate employment efforts across various workforce development entities, schools, organizations and communities to provide work-based learning experiences, occupational skills training, and employment placements to increase opportunities for youth, particularly those at risk of not completing



their high school education, to gain the skills needed to be successful in post-secondary education and employment. These efforts will also be cascaded to all other community members seeking employment with a livable wage.

The primary purpose of this grant is to provide employment training opportunities to individuals living within the Lower Richland area. This grant seeks to provide workforce readiness skills, career exploration, career preparation, work-based learning, and career training that will provide the residents with the skills necessary to become college and/or career ready. We will accomplish this by providing our participants with exposure to career possibilities and mentors based on their interest, aptitude, and labor market needs. The purpose of this project is to ensure that all individuals living within the traditionally underserved portions of the Lower Richland area have access to quality livable wage careers.

The primary activities, of which may take place in-person, virtually, or a combination of the two, will include: 1) conducting work/career readiness interest and assessments, to include using innovative virtual/gaming technology platforms to assess the abilities, aptitudes, and career interests of the participants all while promoting learning; 2) providing labor market/employment information about in-demand industry local available occupations to include career awareness/counseling and exploration services; 3) providing paid work experiences, (internships, pre-apprenticeships, and Registered Apprenticeships); and 4) providing small non-monetary incentives to the program participants for recognition and achievement of their identified program goals.

Midlands Fatherhood Coalition

The project purpose is to improve economic mobility, achieved through a wholistic program. Methods include providing information, education, goal setting and individual case management. The objectives are focused on fathers understanding the impact they have on their children's outcomes and their financial and emotional responsibilities. The programmatic focus is on parenting skills, healthy relationships (co-parenting and beyond), mental and physical health, financial literacy/ economic mobility, and job attainment. MFC addresses barriers to fatherhood, including establishing paternity, visitation, and custody rights, expunging records, reinstating driver's licenses, transportation, stable housing, health issues, getting a GED or attaining certifications or job training and job placement. The needs are highly individualized. Dad's set goals, attend peer group sessions and work weekly with Intervention Specialists who ensure that they have resources and support to attain goals. We strive to deliver excellent services and achieve related outcomes.

From an economic mobility and workplace development perspective, our purpose is to provide the information, support and opportunities to experience economic mobility. Through our 6-week Peer Group Session series, participants will work with our evidence-informed curriculum, invite subject matter specialists to present and have participants use a workbook, to evaluate their own situation and set goals. Topics include Understanding Child Support, Credit, Financial Impact on Family- budgeting,



retirement, savings, insurance, banking, loans, etc. Intervention Specialists work with each participant to provide resources and support for goal attainment.

Employment Services include, Kuder Job Assessment, Week Long Job Readiness Boot Camp, where fathers learn the mindset and soft skills necessary to obtain and keep a job. Staff facilitates setting up job interviews. MFC supports fathers who need to continue their education, receive certifications, or need special clothing and even transportation to get to work. All outcomes are recorded in a data base so that we can track monthly progress and success.

National Federation of the Blind of SC dba Successful Transitions

Successful Transitions (ST) strives to fulfill the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) by providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to eligible and potentially eligible students ages 13 – 21, but not limited to this age range. Our Transition Specialists train students statewide in Work Readiness. Students learn resumé building, accessing transportation, workplace etiquette/culture, soft skills, and practice mock interviews. Work-based learning opportunities include job shadowing, workplace tours, job/career exploration, and paid internship placements. Our program is customized to meet the individual goals and needs of each student. Successful Transitions partners or collaborates with many reputable resources for optimal work-prep training. Another way we tailor our program for each student's individual needs is by developing adult and peer mentoring opportunities, and group sessions covering a range of career interests.

Pre-ETS Service 2, work-readiness training, is designed for groups of Vocational Rehabilitation (SCVRD or SCCB) eligible or potentially eligible students statewide. Work-readiness training includes curriculum to develop social skills and independent living knowledge, such as interpersonal communication skills, financial literacy, orientation and mobility proficiency, conducting job searches, and basic soft skills. Services can be taught in a classroom setting to a large group or be tailored to an individual's needs in a training program in either a classroom or community setting.

Work- readiness activities are shown below:

- a. Professional Skills: Good written and verbal communication skills with coworkers and consumers, Team building skills, networking ability, observing Health and Safety guidelines, and knowledge of organizational structure;
- b. Interpersonal Skills: Positive attitude, strong Work Ethic, Integrity/dependability, and good Time-Management skills;
- c. Cultivating a positive personal online presence: good cyber security practices and monitoring social media accounts;
- d. Independent Living: Budgeting / Financial Management, good Hygiene, Appropriate dress, Community Access, utilizing Transportation, and Household management.

Richland County Library



According to the Pew Research Center, people with lower incomes rely more on smartphones and are more likely to use them for tasks traditionally reserved for larger screens, such as seeking out and applying for jobs. The digital divide widened during the COVID-19 pandemic when work, school, health appointments, and more moved online, increasing barriers for lower-income households navigating an increasingly digital environment.

To increase computer availability in underserved households and assist jobseekers, Richland Library will create a pilot laptop giveaway program geared toward residents participating in Richland Library's workforce development programs such as career coaching, Career Online High School, and entrepreneurial programs. While program participants must attend at least one workforce development program hosted by Richland Library, once the device is placed in the home, it will provide important online access that can support education, health care services, employment options, and connect households to the digital world. Program participants will complete surveys to give feedback and measure where participants are in their workforce journey after participating in library workforce development programs.

Our goal is to assist 350 citizens financially impacted by COVID seeking employment or higher-paying jobs to recoup lost wages or earn more to combat higher living expenses in today's economic climate. Each device is optimized for accessing the internet, joining virtual meetings, creating documents, and more. Internet service is not included, although all laptops will have the ability to connect to WiFi. Richland Library has hotspots for library card users to check out.

Project goals include:

- Develop solutions relating to gaps in digital infrastructure by providing 350 computers for lower-income households.
- Promote Richland Library career and workforce development programs to underserved households.
- Provide a link to community and Library resources to those who do not have access.

USC Technology Incubator

South Carolina (SC) has >200,000 displaced workers due to COVID-19. K-12 education, workforce development, higher education, and the business community agree SC must connect under/unemployed workers to business sectors with the greatest talent and labor needs.

The USC Columbia Technology Incubator Workforce Development Accelerator acts as a program/case manager to connect under/unemployed Midlands SC citizens with community non-profit and for-profit partners to create, develop, and implement short-term educational programs and certificate courses for SC employers that have workforce needs.

The Accelerator will perform following activities:



- (1) Providing case management and counseling to ensure potential workers meet requirements to enter the workforce.
- (2) Connecting worker to job opportunities
- (3) Pairing the worker with a training/certification programs
- (4) Tracking the worker during the first 60 days of employment

The Accelerator will prioritize minorities and individuals in Midlands distressed communities/Opportunity Zones and will enable economic growth in those regions. This includes focusing on in-demand jobs available in these communities, aligning education and job training opportunities with the community, and meeting the unique needs of individuals who may have challenges related to transportation, childcare or limitations in access to technology associated with living and working in these communities. This program will help displaced workers return to gainful employment; help new workers enter jobs within the in-demand business and industry sectors and occupations; and transition underemployed workers to new fields.

This program was funded in 2022 with \$200,000 from Truist which resulted in 200+ workforce certifications and over 50 jobs. This program is funded with Truist funding at \$250,000 for 2023 and 2024 for a total of \$500,000 and with sole program management from Chad Hardaway, Incubator Director. This funding from Richland County will help expand and deepen the impact of the existing program by adding a program manager and case worker.

Education Assistance

Boys and Girls Clubs of the Midlands

The purpose for the Education Assistant Project is to hire Certified Teachers in each our 30 BE GREAT Academy after-school and summer camp programs across Richland County in order to address the lingering learning loss our youth are experiencing due to the COVID shutdown. Those 30 BE GREAT Academy programs all reside in Richland County elementary and middle schools. As we look to recruit the certified teachers to serve the over 1700 youth we serve in Richland County.

The Education Assistant Project will provide an opportunity for Certified Teachers that potentially need additional income to stay after-school (do not leave the school), continue to follow their passion of serving youth, and make the additional income they may need. Hiring Certified Teachers to work in our BE GREAT Academy program will be beneficial on many levels. Starting with the level of training and qualifications Certified Teachers come to us with. We provide ALL of our staff with training but the additional expertise (specifically in the field of youth development) Certified Teachers bring make them great candidates. Our school partners like the opportunity to provide their Certified Teachers with the additional income opportunity and the consistency from the school day through after-school to maintain the school culture. Most importantly for our members, this will provide them with high quality staff that they are familiar with and already have established relationships that can carry over into the after-school hours.



We intend to advertise at each of the 30 Richland County elementary and middle schools to recruit for the Education Assistant positions. We will also advertise throughout the entire school districts that we are serve in as well as doing a social media campaign.

Lower Richland Alumni Foundation

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, a large number of our area youth, who were already behind their peers academically in the area, have fallen even further behind. This project will provide a hands-on tutoring approach based on the student's individualized learning needs for math, reading, and English as taken from their individualized assessment testing (School Report Card) data from Richland County School District One and shared with us by the student's guardian. Once the student's deficiencies are identified, an individualized student education plan will be created and used to tutor these individuals in math, reading, English, and language arts, Sylvan Learning Centers style. Additionally, students will also obtain study skills and test taking strategies, as well as assistance with college and WorkKeys placement testing strategies. We will also teach and reinforce Soft Skills as well as ensure that students are proficient in utilizing computers to apply for employment opportunities. Without a doubt, getting students back on track academically because of the learning lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic is not only needed in the area but critical for the area youth to survive.

Funds will be used to increase the existing proposed staffing levels of our newly created educational learning centers which are strategically placed throughout the Lower Richland area of Richland County. Funds from this grant will be used in conjunction with a newly obtained federal grant of which one of the primary objectives is to increase by 5% year-over-year the education attainment opportunities for the area residents and implement multiple new educational opportunities via our partners.

As stated earlier, these educational learning centers will also have a Sylvan Learning Centers approach to helping students with their homework and will provide study skills support and test prep activities to include professional coaching in test taking strategies.

Lynn Brown Inspires

Did not provide an abstract.

Planned Parenthood South Atlantic

During the project period, PPSAT will offer sex education programming to Richland County residents. During the pandemic, PPSAT's virtual sex education filled a gap in health programming for teens and families in Richland County that resulted from COVID-19 as schools moved to prioritize other key components of the school curriculum. Now that schools are back in person, PPSAT will continue to



play a critical role in providing adolescents and young adults with the information they may have missed over the past two years through virtual school.

In the coming year, PPSAT will provide:

- Multi-session education programs. The community health educator has received training on the following multi-session programs: Making Proud Choices, Making Proud Choices Plus, Smart Girls, Get Real, Health Improvement Project for Teens, and INcluded. All these programs have been proven through rigorous evaluation to prevent teen pregnancies, STIs, or sexual risk behaviors.
- Family engagement. The educator engages young people and their parents or caregivers in programs that help families talk more comfortably about issues that can be difficult to discuss. Programs include the evidence-based Parents Matter, family nights, and service opportunities.
- Single-topic community presentations for adolescents and young adults (mostly 13-24). These presentations are meant to provide science-based information on specific topics that complement community partner programming and are customized for the age and demographics of the audience.
- In the grant period (January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2024), the educator will serve:
- 100 adolescents through multi-session programs. Participants will show an average change in knowledge of at least 10%.
- 50 parents through parent-specific education programs. At least 75% of parents will show an increased comfort level in talking to their children about sex and sexuality.
- 100 individuals through single-session community programs. At least 75% of participants will rate the program as Above Average or Excellent.

Richland County Public Library

According to the SC Department of Education, students showed decreased academic growth in 2020 as compared to previous years. To level the academic field in our community, Richland Library will improve learning loss for 300-400 elementary students and expand current Education Studio programming to additional library locations in Richland County.

Richland Library's Education Studio empowers parents and motivates students outside of school by offering free, high-quality, evidence-based books, materials, and learning games that directly relate to students with learning differences, especially dyslexia. Located at Richland Library's Main location, Education Studio programs utilize the Orton-Gillingham (OG) approach, a highly researched evidence-based program that is effective in helping students who struggle with reading increase their decoding and fluency, even when the child has a learning disability, such as dyslexia or ADHD. Locally, similar programs with specialized training and materials can cost up to \$2,000.

**RICHLAND COUNTY
GRANTS DEPARTMENT**

2020 Hampton Street
Columbia, SC 29204
803-929-6000



Grant funds will be used to expand Education Studio programs to additional library locations, reaching more underserved children in Richland County reading below grade level who have suffered learning loss during the pandemic. Richland Library will:

- Increase staff capacity by hiring contracted experts and interns to assist current staff to expand these programs.
- Provide four, week-long reading camps for 10 students each (40 total). Camp locations will be selected, with priority going to those in qualified census tracts serving low-income households.
- Host 3-5 parent/caregiver classes and one-on-one reading consultations at Richland Library locations provided by the Orton-Gillingham expert.
- Increase accessibility of these programs by training library staff members across our system's 13 branches, particularly those in children's librarian and youth services positions, in the Orton-Gillingham methodology.
- Increase Education Studio curriculum materials across the library system. Each location will receive decodable readers, multi-sensory card decks, and Orton-Gillingham workbooks.

Riverbanks Society

Riverbanks Zoo and Garden is seeking financial support to improve our farm classroom to expand and improve our services offered to K12 audiences, teens, and families with early childhood learners. This learning space has some of the best geographic proximity to exhibits and spaces utilized by our guests however it is not well designed to meet current guest and programmatic needs. ARPA funds will be used to increase the flexibility of the farm classroom with renovations that improve the use of the square footage to reduce storage space, expand the indoor learning space and enhance access to adjacent outdoor learning space. As a result of the renovations, this space will increase the number of educational participants Riverbanks can serve on our campus, improve accessibility for guests utilizing wheelchairs and strollers, and support the use of social distancing and outdoor learning spaces as needed. These renovations are important to our continued and expanded success in engaging learners of all ages in meaningful educational experiences.

SC Thrive

South Carolina has less than two percent of its population trained in Mental Health First Aid. However, 56.2% of South Carolinians aged 12-17 who have depression did not receive any care in the previous year. 37.6% of South Carolina adults reported symptoms of anxiety in February 2021, and 23.3% of that population were unable to access counseling or therapy; mostly due to cost, or not knowing where to go for help. SC Thrive, one of the leading state-wide trainers of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), is partnering with Richland County to make a demonstrable change in the treatment of transition-aged youth and community awareness of behavioral health resources available to people with limited incomes. SC Thrive will provide Adult and Youth MHFA training to 300 school personnel and



community members located within Richland County School Districts One, Two, and School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties. MHFA offerings in schools will address increased rates of behavioral health challenges in youth. SC Thrive will provide certified trainers to strategically connect with the targeted populations and assist in scheduling the training. SC Thrive will also collaborate with the SC Department of Mental Health, and participating schools to refer parents to adequate mental health and other community resources such as food, housing, social services, and healthcare benefits to stabilize households within the target population. The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course offered by SC Thrive empowers participants to identify signs and symptoms of mental health disorders, the risk of potential suicide, and how to de-escalate and assist during a mental health crisis. At the end of the course, trainees receive a three-year international certification as a Mental Health First Aider accredited by the National Council for Mental Well-being.

United Way

United Way of the Midlands requests \$200,000 for the Midlands Reading Consortium (MRC) program to combat learning loss of kindergarten through third graders due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and to improve student social and emotional resiliency. Additional academic support is critical because of the impacts of the pandemic. According to Annie E Casey's Kids County, 14% of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders in South Carolina failed their grade level in 2021-2022. This is compared to 1.4% and .08% in the two years prior which demonstrates the negative impacts of the pandemic. Children also experienced social isolation and mental health challenges during the pandemic which directly impacted learning.

MRC, a direct service program of UWM, started in 2007 to increase the number of children reading at grade level at the start of fourth grade. MRC helps children build reading comprehension, literacy, and vocabulary skills through one-to-one reading sessions, guest reading opportunities, supporting summer reading camps, book donations and family engagement events. Weekly one-to-one reading engagement sessions with trained volunteers are the main component of MRC. In addition to the educational support, MRC builds resilience and mitigates social isolation in the students by connecting with them to trusted adults and increasing their self-confidence.

The program has the following outcomes: (1) Students are promoted to the next grade level; (2) Increased student interest in reading; (3) Improved attitudes towards reading; (4) Increased confidence in reading ability; (5) Strengthened reader/ writer ability; (6) Improved reading strategies; (7) Increase student access to books; (8) Increase parent engagement about reading.

Food Insecurity

Midlands Housing Alliance



On any given night in South Carolina more 2600 individuals are without permanent housing. People experiencing homelessness are more likely to become ill, have greater hospitalization rates, and are more likely to die at a younger age than the general population. The diets of the homeless are frequently characterized as being high in saturated fat and deficient in fiber and certain micronutrients- all of which can have negative implications for physical and mental health.

Similar to other homeless shelters around the country, our meals have to be cost effective due to limited budgets and public support for feeding the homeless. Though many meal sites in the area exist, the food is usually high in fat, low in fiber, and lacks the required daily nutrients as meals need to be dense to keep individuals full longer. Our current meals are purchased from the Salvation Army and supplemented with donations from our food recovery program. The snacks that are provided to clients with medical needs like diabetes are from our local food recovery program and can vary wildly as we never know what will be donated by the businesses and institutions. While most of our clients do receive SNAP benefits, that program does not allow homeless people to purchase hot food or to carry around groceries as they have no cooking facilities. This project will mitigate some of these problems by funding nutritionally rich food for the hot meal program, bag lunch, and snacks for the 330 individuals served daily by Transitions.

In addition, COVID-19 has had serious repercussions on our meal program. Our food cost has more than doubled since the onset of the pandemic. This along with increased sanitation has had a serious impact on our budget and our ability to help the homeless.

PALSS-Palmetto AIDS Life Support Services, Inc.

PALSS proposes to address the food security needs of persons living with or at risk of HIV and AIDS. We will address food availability, food access, food utilization and food stability through support of our on-site emergency food pantry. Funds will be used to purchase food supplies including canned goods; dry goods including flour, meal, grains, cereal, beans, sugar; protein products which include meat and vegan options; fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables; food boxes, two commercial refrigerators and a freezer. PALSS purchases much of our food pantry inventory at a discounted price from Harvest Hope Food Bank.

Data collection will include:

- # of meal (or equivalents) provided
- # of individuals and families served
- # of food boxes dispensed

Outcome 1. Provide access to food and food supplies for persons living with or at risk for HIV and AIDS.

Measure 1. Purchase commercial refrigerators and freezer as documented by receipts.

Measure 2. Increase the amount of fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables available in the food pantry documented by inventory lists.



Measure 3. Increase in the number of meals provided vs. prior two years documented by food distribution logs.

Measure 4. Increase in the number of individuals and families served vs. prior two years documented by food distribution logs.

PRISMA Health Midlands

Purpose: Feeding America shared that the communities most impacted by the pandemic were food insecure before COVID-19 and have experienced increased hardship since COVID-19. In 2020, the Columbia Food Policy Committee completed a study of the 29203 neighborhoods and found that healthy foods were hard to access. The Prisma Health Family Medicine Center-Colonial Drive (PHFMC-CD) is located in the 29203 community, which includes the census 5.00 tract (QCT). In part due to food insecurity, during the pandemic physicians noted that patients struggled to control their health through diet.

Objectives: 1) Use an innovative partnership between PHFMC-CD and ‘Your Dollar Store’ – both serving a census track known to have lower income and health related racial disparities. 2) Improve the wellbeing of patients with health conditions highly impacted by food insecurity. 3) To encourage sustainable access to fresh produce in the census 5.00 tract community. 4) Reduce the burden of transportation by partnering with a convenience store one block away.

Methods: PHFMC-CD will provide \$15 vouchers to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at ‘Your Dollar Store’. Patients would be identified during their office visit for the program if they fit into anyone of the following categories: Positive findings on their Social Determinants of Health Survey; Uncontrolled hypertension; Uncontrolled diabetes; Obesity; Pediatric wellness visit; and Prenatal visit. Each voucher number would be recorded and compared against those redeemed at ‘Your Dollar Store’. This registry of patients would be followed over the course of the grant to see which patients redeemed vouchers and the impact of being in the program. Grant funding will be used to reimburse ‘Your Dollar Store’ for the redeemed vouchers. Additionally, grant funds will be used to administer the program and provide ‘Your Dollar Store’ with equipment to store the increased volume of produce.

Senior Resources

Senior Resources requests consideration for \$822,069.00 for the Senior Meals Program for July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2024, to meet continued and increased needs for food insecurity and malnutrition for older adults in need within our community. During the pandemic, we saw a 504% increase in food insecurity referrals, which has led to a continued increased need for meals. These funds will be used to serve nutritious meals to homebound and disabled seniors in all communities in Richland County through our Meals on Wheels program, as well as through group dining (congregate) community centers located throughout the county. Funds will be used to meet unmet costs to provide for elevated post-COVID service delivery, including food, program supplies, meal program staffing, vehicle operations for transportation of food (Meals on Wheels) and seniors (congregate), and meal centers’



programmatic operational costs/utilities. Senior Resources previously received \$548,046 in pre-selected ARPA funding for the same service from July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023. This pre-selected amount, originally requested through general fund appropriations for meals and other senior assistance programming, was designated for ARPA funding for meal programs only by the county council in the FY23 budgeting process. The dollar amount for this additional request continues to the exact dollar amount per month approved by the council in FY23 for an additional 18 months, through the end of the published ARPA funding cycle on December 31, 2024.

Serve and Connect

Serve & Connect offers the ability to meet Richland County residents where they are and address food insecurity via police officers through our Greg's Groceries Program. Serve & Connect is a nonprofit with the mission of fostering positive change through sustainable police and community partnerships and our Greg's Groceries program was launched in 2017. Law enforcement agencies in Richland County that will receive this help will be Richland County Sheriff's Office, Columbia Police Department, and Forest Acres Police Department. At its core, the Greg's Groceries Program provides police officers with food and resources that enable their ability to help people in need, make connections, and bridge available community support. Specifically, we will provide 1,000 Greg's Groceries boxes of shelf-stable food. Each box of food is intended to feed a family of four for a week. Police officers can deliver boxes to individuals and families in need through a variety of ways, including while on a call for service, through community referrals, and as part of strategic community outreach. When officers deliver the box of food, they are meeting an immediate need - hunger - while also identifying other needs the recipient may have. Each box of food includes a list of available local resources and officers are encouraged to connect recipients with other services such as local food banks or other supports that might help them address food insecurity in a sustainable way. Serve & Connect will also launch Greg's Groceries Express to the three identified agencies in Richland County, to provide 875 Express bags of nonperishable food designed for individuals who are unsheltered and may not have access to a stove to cook food. Whereas Greg's Groceries boxes are intended for families experiencing food insecurity, Greg's Groceries Express is designed for individuals who are experiencing homelessness and food insecurity.

The Nurturing Center

The Community Impact Grant submitted by The Nurturing Center will connect low-income families who lack resources to easily accessible transportation to and from the agency and other community services and nutrition to aid in focusing on therapeutic treatment. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic The Nurturing Center has utilized many ways to decrease the negative impact of the pandemic. The agency has remained open, continues to be a consistent resource for our clients and provides treatment to our families and individuals. What we have found is that there is an increasing need due to gaps in care since COVID-19 for nutritional care and transportation related to the populations we serve. The Nurturing Center is requesting \$150,000 for the Community Impact Grant that provides food security and transportation to clients we serve. Funds will also be utilized to assist



in obtaining nutritional care for the families and individuals we serve. This includes breakfast, lunch and snacks five days per week while receiving on-site mental health services. This also includes education and transportation to obtain resources to assist with food insecurity. The Community Impact Grant will fund transportation which includes fuel, maintenance, food, routine and emergency repairs and staff's time transporting clients. By providing transportation and nutritional care as an intervention we can decrease food insecurity and increase access to mental health services, anger management and parenting programs in our community. These funds will be used to directly fund services that are not reimbursed by any other entity. The target population of our program is low socioeconomic status participants with a lack of resources and transportation. We serve all ethnicities and genders. We look forward to being able to put our grant into action.

Affordable Housing

Able SC

Able SC seeks to improve the availability of accessible, and affordable housing across Richland County for people with disabilities. People experiencing homelessness often lack access to stable housing and frequently turn to emergency services, transitional shelters, or other environments that may pose a risk to their safety. These environments are often not designed with disability accessibility in mind, and staff often lack specialized training to support people with disabilities.

Able SC proposes 1) enhanced programmatic services for people with disabilities who are experiencing homeless or at threat of becoming homeless; and 2) establishing the first regional homeless task force with a focus on people with disabilities.

Our plan includes:

- Architectural assessments of homeless service facilities to determine physical accessibility.
- Collaboration with legal systems to address violations of the ADA or the Fair Housing Act in public or private housing facilities.
- Disability Culture Awareness Training to be offered for existing area homeless providers for disability culture and awareness and identifying alternative approaches to serve people with disabilities in homeless environments.
- Fair Housing testing by sending individuals with and without noticeable disabilities to rental units to determine if any existing discrimination occurs in public or private spaces.
- Home and Community-Based Services that include minor physical home modifications allowing people to stay in their homes safely. Classes include independent living skills, financial management, home maintenance and care, and other services.
- Resources and referrals for individuals and their families with supports to assist in deterring homelessness. Additional availability for service providers and community professionals who have questions about disability rights.



The project will establish a peer-based advisory task force to identify and advance additional barriers for people with disabilities facing homelessness.

Good Samaritan Community Development Corp

Through the ReCover Initiative project, we seek to repair 100 roofs for residents adversely affected by the economic downturn of COVID-19. Within Richland County’s identified Qualified Census Tracts (QCT), low-income homeowners are facing a myriad of negative economic impacts as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Initiative will target low-income homeowners' households with the most vulnerable populations (elderly age 65 - above / children age 5- less). We will ensure that each home is “dried in” resulting in a safer and healthier living environment.

The identified QCT’s comprising the target area historically possess key indicators of economic distress which contribute to the long-term decline of the area and form the basis for the ReCover Initiative project activities. The targeted service area is inundated with high levels of substandard housing, low wealth opportunities, and high crime creating a community heavily concentrated and trapped in poverty. Residents within these QCT’s are predominately people of color, female, and disproportionally represent the service industries impacted the most by COVID-related job loss. These socioeconomic factors mean homeowners are unable to secure the additional funding needed to make repairs imperative to a safe and healthy home.

The 2018 City of Columbia Consolidated Housing Plan shows over 35% of the building structures in the area need major repair, and the City of Columbia Building Inspection Office estimates that over 50% of the available housing units are substandard. The target area also has a high population density residing in substandard housing of almost 9,000 persons per square mile. These factors combine to reduce the quality of life for area residents. The ReCover Initiative will provide safer homes, remove blight, and revitalize the community to foster healthier residents. The program has the potential to impact thousands of lives and help in creating healthy, sustainable communities.

Greenville Housing Fund

Greenville Housing Fund (GHF) requests \$980,000 in ARPA funds from Richland County to leverage its \$15+ million investment to preserve, protect, and strengthen Gable Oaks, a 200-unit affordable apartment home community located at 901 Colleton Street. GHF is a successful, experienced nonprofit affordable housing developer, lender and equity investor, and affordable housing policy advocate.

Gable Oaks, built in 1971, currently receives rental assistance for every unit, enabling it to serve renter-households ranging from under 30% of area median income (AMI) up to 60% AMI. This extensive rental assistance feature, available to income-qualified residents in each unit, is unique and unusual in Richland County.



A period of ineffective management and a proliferation of crime led to elevated vacancy rates and an undesirable brand identity for the property. GHF believes that stabilizing and protecting Gable Oaks is an extremely important project. If the property is not stabilized, the valuable rental assistance is at risk of evaporating as contracts and agreements expire, at which point the entire complex is likely to be sold and converted to market-rate apartments, forever removing it as a source of affordable housing for Richland County residents.

GHF has committed to purchase Gable Oaks with the goals of maintaining the precious rental assistance, making critically-needed renovations, instituting skillful and effective property management, increasing security measures, and bringing new wraparound support services to the property to assist residents as they recover economically and otherwise from the Covid pandemic. These measures, supported by the critical funding in this ARPA request, will ensure that Gable Oaks remains a community affordable housing asset for the long term.

NAACP Columbia SC Branch

The Columbia Branch NAACP Housing Navigator program aims to break the cycle of housing instability by assisting families facing eviction and homelessness to access the financial, legal, and social services necessary to meet their individual housing needs. The Navigator Program volunteers provide renters and their families with holistic support and guidance. Through this project, we plan to serve approximately 1000 families in Richland County by focusing on the following areas:

1. **Administrative Support and Navigator Stipends:** We will use funds to bolster the program's administrative capacity and hire staff to complete tasks such as conducting intake calls, assisting clients with identifying vital resources, and establishing court-based Navigators who will aid clients on the day of their eviction hearing. We will also use funds to purchase supplies and support and general operations for the program, as well as compensate our volunteers for the expenses they incur while assisting clients.
2. **Research and Strategic Advocacy:** The Navigator Program's Policy and Advocacy is an extension of the Housing Navigator Program comprised of former and current Navigators. Funding would enable the working group to research and investigate local housing issues in order to help local officials develop policies and programs that will help people access affordable housing.
3. **Emergency Community Funding:** Emergency funds will be used to provide financial assistance to clients facing imminent eviction of homelessness and cannot access other funding.
4. **Education and Outreach:** To redress the lack of community knowledge about the eviction process and available resources, we will use funding to bolster community education through flyers, Know-Your-Rights events, listening sessions, community gatherings, and community trainings in partnership with other providers.

Our key projected outcomes include:



1. Reducing eviction rates through coordinated access to legal and financial resources and preventive measures;
2. Creating long lasting rental assistance infrastructure in Richland County.

The Cooperative Ministry

Re-housing Richland is a collaboration between The Cooperative Ministry and the Richland Library Social Work Department to serve county residents who have experienced pandemic-related housing instability. The project features comprehensive case management to help 50 displaced households secure and sustain permanent housing. In addition, the project will assist in preventing involuntary displacements for 50 households that are at risk due to rent or utility arrears.

With a strong reputation for resource navigation and holistic services, Richland Library's social workers bring an array of housing, career, and job placement services and benefits assistance, as well as emergency services (rent, utilities, phones, and vital documents), to the Re-Housing Richland project. Through meaningful case management, the Social Work Department also links residents to complementary services such as The Cooperative Ministry's financial health and empowerment activities for helping households achieve and sustain economic self-sufficiency.

In addition to receiving client referrals from the Social Work Department, The Cooperative Ministry (TCM) will serve as the fiduciary agent for Re-Housing Richland. TCM will have full responsibility for managing the project's finances, including timely and accurate processing of payments to landlords, utility companies, and other providers on behalf of the individuals and families served by Re-Housing Richland.

Project activities will be tracked in Charity Tracker, allowing the Richland Library Social Work Department to monitor and report all grant metrics. Success will be measured by meeting participation goals; getting participants re-housed; spending all grant funds within the grant period; and case management and client follow-up surveys to track program efficiency and outcomes.

The Mighty ChariotWheel Stewardship and Learning Center

Through the Richland County Government American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Grant opportunity, The Mighty ChariotWheel Stewardship and Learning Center will implement a program designed to combat the negative effects of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) by advancing work that mitigates and prevents the virus in a manner consistent with recommendations and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, by providing and increasing affected populations' access to assistance for food and housing needs, internet access and digital literacy, social services and public benefits, childcare costs for capacity enhancing endeavors, services that address the impacts of lost instructional time, career and skills-building programs, and guidance for those seeking entrepreneurship. Intended beneficiaries of this program are low-income, especially marginalized, families living in Richland County that have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.



This project is vital because research shows that low-income families will be primed to overcome the pandemic only through assistance for food, housing, utility bills, job attainment, career advancement guidance, COVID-19 myths dissipation, and academic support for their children. Nationwide, COVID-19 has disproportionately negatively impacted low-income Black populations and predominantly Black communities. Likewise, those groups living within Richland County have parallel experiences. Further, Black people, low-income workers, women, and disabled populations disproportionately lost their jobs during the pandemic and experienced higher rates of negative health outcomes and death.

The outcomes forecasted for systematically disenfranchised communities are not novel to the COVID-19 pandemic or the resulting economic downturn. However, COVID-19 vastly exacerbated them. To begin remediating these circumstances, our primary activities will include a multi-tiered, culturally competent tactical plan that will offer: COVID-19 awareness on prevention, testing, and vaccination, job skills training, career and entrepreneurship workshops, housing cost support, outsource counseling, food assistance, K-12 educational resources, social services linkage, financial stability classes, trauma-informed programming, and rent, utilities, and vital resources funds.

Youth and Recreation Services

Able SC

Able SC is working to establish the Equip Core program. This new initiative seeks to address the increased mental health and social isolation issues since the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly among young adults with disabilities. The project aims to establish an inclusive and accessible program that encourages the development of social, emotional, and independent living skills by bringing youth together in welcoming spaces throughout the community.

Equip Core will accomplish this goal by offering a variety of new and existing programming designed to bring young people together around a mission to connect them with their communities and support each other in building the skills they need to reach their goals in the future.

Key Factors of Success:

- This project will be open to all youth, with and without disabilities, 13-28 years old, in the Richland County community.
- The project will provide new and expanded opportunities for connecting Richland County youth with integrated and accessible recreational opportunities.
- The programming will take place at various locations throughout the community.
- Provide activities focused on improving self-esteem, self-advocacy skills, quality of life, engagement and satisfaction with services and supports, and overall health for youth with disabilities.



- The project will use an evidence-based peer-to-peer model to provide services and prioritize referrals to appropriate community support and assistance.
- The project will recruit participants through various methods, including social media, newsletters, and partner connections.
- Funds will be used to develop and implement a program to support youth adults with disabilities in being full and active participants in community life's recreational and peer-connected aspects.

Equip Core at its foundation is a transformative program designed to foster the development of social, emotional, and independent living skills through inclusive, community-based experiences for the youth of Richland County.

Midlands Mediation Center

The Community Violence Reduction project empowers local communities to reduce violence and increase civic engagement with data-informed strategies. The project aims to prevent and respond to community violence through mediation, restorative justice practices, conflict coaching, conflict management training and community dialogues. MMC will lead the project in capacity-building efforts (listening sessions), funding community intervention personnel, providing training and professional development for community residents, and hiring and training personnel to administer the programs. Midlands Mediation Center methods incorporate the Cure the Violence model for the interruption, The CDC's model for Preventing Youth Violence and Community Violence, and The NAFCM/JAMS model for Listening Sessions for sustainable change.

MMC will analyze violence clusters and transmission dynamics and use community representatives (leaders and residents) to interrupt transmission and change community norms around the use of violence.

Participants receive extensive education and coaching in evidence-based methods of mediation, persuasion, behavior change, and norm change — all of which are essential for limiting the spread of outbreaks of violence. The project participants will present as peers to their community in training and listening sessions.

The strategies taught and modeled through training and dialogues include:

- promoting family environments that support healthy development,
- strengthening youth's conflict engagement skills,
- creating protective community environments, and
- intervening to lessen harm and prevent future risks.

The Listening Sessions will evaluate through focus groups individual actions to thought, project, or product coupled with restorative practices allowing individuals to focus more on the harm caused through structures, practices, or policies.



Provide additional context regarding salaries and rental spaces.

Project Lead \$38,250 / \$45 per hour * 850 hours

Trainers & Facilitators \$21,800

- program listening sessions \$1000 @ 5 = \$5,000
- training session @ 12 = \$4000
- Strategic planning session \$1,800
- Community Townhall Meetings \$500.00 @ 20= \$10,000;

Contractors / Services and Community: \$33,420

- Training Designer \$5,000
- Data Analyst: (proximately \$150.00 per hour, approximately 50 hours \$7,550)
- Research Assistant: \$45 per hour for approximately 52 hours (\$2,340)

Space (Rental / Community Centers) \$15,250

- Rental space for townhalls and community listening sessions - \$6,500
- Local community center training sites - \$2,400
- MMC Office space (administrative) - \$6,360

Serve and Connect

Serve & Connect will work to address hot spots of community and youth violence in Richland County. While gun violence is an urgent priority county-wide, there are growing concerns with the rise in violence in the Northeast areas in Richland County to include the Dentsville and Woodfield communities. Serve & Connect is a nonprofit with the mission of fostering positive change through sustainable police and community partnerships. We will provide a community-based approach to violence reduction in the Dentsville area that focuses on strengthening connections among residents, social services (non-profits, faith-based organizations, education, etc.) and police with the goal of enhancing trust and increasing access to available resources to a community in need. To achieve this, we will utilize our evidence-based COMPASS Program to build a community-based network where police and citizens work together to address drivers of crime to foster positive community change. This will take place across two phases: Phase I: Exploration & Trust-building and Phase II: Community Mobilization and Mapping Needs to Assets where we seek to understand the drivers of challenges and crime factors facing a community. We work to build relationships with those who live and serve in this community and seek to connect them with one another around a shared goal of community improvement. Specific activities we complete will be to: (1)conduct a comprehensive needs and assessment, (2)launch a partnership network to build relationships between police and service providers, (3)engage in strategic community outreach, (4)work with partners to develop branding and shared language and vision, (5)develop and implementation and sustainability plan, (6)launch collaborative discussions within the community, and (7)launch a neighborhood council of engaged residents to ensure a community voice and leadership in efforts to address crime. The goal is to develop a locally-owned and locally-driven movement that lasts for years to come.



The Big Red Barn Retreat

The objective of the ARPA funded grant is to support unique and experiential training, Warrior PATHH, designed for the veteran community culture. The training serves to create an environment for safe communication, teaches nontraditional therapeutic techniques to address maladaptive coping behaviors, and how to position traumatic events and COVID-19 psychological distress as catalysts for positive change. The mission of The Big Red Barn Retreat (BRBR) is to provide heroes with transformative programs, training, and services so they become the best version of themselves.

Participants who complete the BRBR Warrior PATHH flagship training report a reduction in PTSD symptoms as soon as the seventh day. The term posttraumatic growth encompasses breakthroughs from struggle to strength. In order to harness the power of their extensive military training and psychological distress, veterans and active duty service members must be trained to repurpose their abilities.

By encouraging open and honest dialogue about struggles, posttraumatic growth in the home and in the workplace can be achieved by fostering interpersonal connections. The participants learn emotional regulation techniques to mitigate the stressors of COVID-19 as it worsens mental wellness for veterans struggling with PTSD issues.

The team of Warrior PATHH guides are a unique blend of veterans and first responders who have previously attended Warrior PATHH training. All have had experiences with struggle and have achieved posttraumatic growth through practices and principles taught within the training. Participants who have completed Warrior PATHH report a reduction in symptoms, an increase in personal strength, improvement in all relationships, and a positive spiritual/existential change. Multiple evaluations are in place to chart progress.

PRISMA Health Midlands

Prisma Health and four Midlands school districts partner for telehealth programs in order to offer students a way to receive clinical and educational support for their health needs. Clinical and education programs are available in schools across Richland County School District One, Lexington County School District 1, and Lexington County School District 4. The expansion of these services is critical to the health and well-being of our students. Telehealth Clinical Program Students with health needs are connected to a Prisma Health provider for non-emergency needs and have prescriptions sent to the pharmacy of choice following the visit. This service does not replace existing primary care. Parent/guardians are contacted before any telehealth visit occurs with participating students.

Prisma Health and school districts will continue to work through COVID-19 protocols for school-based health services. Students are required to complete COVID-19 testing to be treated for minor ailments such as runny nose, sore throat, and other cold/flu symptoms.



Training will be provided to all school nurses in using the Tyto Care clinic equipment and platforms at the beginning of the school year, along with individual-requested trainings. Telehealth consent forms will be provided to each student and their family, including both new consents and returning student enrollment letters. With this process, telehealth enrollment will increase each school year. Equipment is updated and upgraded to ensure nurses are more comfortable with Tyto devices than during the initial school year with the new equipment. The TytoCare process involves nursing support from Prisma Health Upstate providers. This model uses an iPad and clinical peripherals, along with a MiFi hotspot to connect to Prisma Health nurses. There are three providers available to assist school nurses with telehealth visits. Providers interact with school nurses to coordinate care and providers follow-up with parents for prescription needs and primary care referrals.

AWARDED CATEGORIES

Broadband Services

CIU-Columbia International University - **Awarded**

Columbia International University is committed to the holistic improvement of families residing in the fourth district of Richland County, SC. The Monticello Road Corridor has been identified as part of South Carolina's broadband desert. Within 15 miles, there are over 15 desert zones. Students in the fourth district of Richland County, SC have faced with tremendous challenges due to the lack of internet connectivity. Therefore, remote learning has negatively impacted the learning experience of students within the fourth district. Accordingly, 4,100 students within 10 miles of Columbia International University have faced struggles related to Math, English-Language Arts and Science. Failure to meet the qualifying standards in these subjects have created a tremendous need for additional support and resources.

Additionally, adults seeking job placement face struggles applying for jobs with livable wages. This problem presents an economic dilemma for individuals seeking employment. Essentially, broadband connectivity lies at the intersection of providing good jobs and quality education in the fourth district of Richland County, SC.

Therefore, Columbia International University (CIU) proposes the Broadband Expansion for the Fourth District of Richland project to provide internet access that will help accommodate the disruption of qualitative education and job placement by COVID-19. This project has the following objectives: 1) provide access to educational resources, and 2) assist citizens with finding jobs paying livable wages. This project will accomplish the following:

1. Make broadband and internet connection available to community members of the fourth district of Richland County,
2. Increase the connectivity and speed of internet access to CIU students,



3. Provide educational resources for citizens and students to provide access to employment opportunities and enhanced educational experiences,
4. Enhance the experience of community members of the fourth district of Richland County using CIU facilities and internet-based devices.

Greater Columbia Community Development Corporation

In the grant proposal we shared a budget line item for \$600k for Broadband and Installation. We propose to provide “FREE” Broadband services to the Residents in our community, consisting of 91 Families, and our leasing office over a 12-year period.

For the Bulk Service, Spectrum shall bill a monthly fee in advance for the Bulk Service (“Bulk Billing Fee”) based on the following calculation.

- Bulk Billing Fee = \$ 45.50 per unit rate x 92 units at the Premises*
- Total Monthly Bulk Billing Fee = \$ 4,186.00
- Total Annual Bulk Billing Fee = \$50,232.00
- *Total number of units at the Premises whether occupied or not: 91 units + Leasing Office

The installation and service provided by Spectrum includes the following:

- Two (2) set top boxes (“STB”) per unit at no charge
- One (1) modem provided per residential unit as part of the Bulk Internet access service at no cost to Resident
- One (1) wireless router is being provided per residential unit as part of the Bulk Internet access service at no cost to Resident
- All above-ground and underground cables, fiber, internal wiring including cable home wiring and home run wiring (“Internal Wiring”), conduit, customer premises equipment (“CPE”), electronics and/or any other equipment or facilities necessary to provide the Services
- The Equipment extends from the external boundary lines of the Premises up to and including the outlets in each unit
- Spectrum will install, maintain, and/or operate the Equipment.
- Spectrum will activate the Services on the Premises no later than sixty (60) days after the delivery of a Certificate of Occupancy for the entire Premises
- Services shall mean all lawful communications services that Spectrum may provide including, all multi-channel video and audio programming services, Internet access services including Wi-Fi Services, and/or voice services

Richland County Public Library - Awarded

HomeSpot is an existing hotspot loan program for households that do not have access to the internet. Per the FCC, over 10,300 county residents do not have broadband access. The lack of internet and



broadband infrastructure creates a digital divide, often excluding lower-income and rural residents from telework, online learning, and telehealth. Over 16% of Richland County's 415,759 residents live in poverty and are disproportionately burdened by the education, health, and economic realities our state is facing.

Grant funds will allow Richland Library to extend the loan of at least 250 hotspots through December 2024, providing internet services to underserved households that do not have access or households where infrastructure is not in place to purchase internet.

Hotspots will be loaned to residents with library cards. Loan periods are four weeks each, with an opportunity to renew if there is no waiting list. Hotspots come packaged with chargers, directions, and troubleshooting information to assist customers with connecting their devices. Customers who participate in HomeSpot will be surveyed to gather demographic and hotspot use data.

Using a smartphone, tablet, or computer, households will be able to connect to their schools for virtual learning, have the wi-fi needed to apply for unemployment and SNAP food benefits, apply for jobs, reach out to community groups and organizations for resources, and stay connected in a social distancing world.

This project reduces the digital divide in Richland County by providing:

- More digital access in residences without broadband service
- More internet use for education, work, and general use among those lacking digital access
- A link to community and Library resources for those who do not have access.
- More digital access in lower income and rural residences

Richland County Recreation Commission

Richland County Recreation Commission serves a population of over 415,000 citizens in Richland County. There are several cities/towns within the county and in these areas, they have large rural communities. The ARPA Grant funds will be used for purchasing IT infrastructure, fiber optics, up-to-date hardware and software that will allow the agency to provide these rural communities with access to high-speed internet and up-to-date technology, which are described below:

Internet infrastructure

Being able to have high speed internet access available for the community in our centers will allow the patrons to have access to those internet resources. This will provide opportunities to look for jobs or have a virtual job interview. This will also allow for after-school activities for young people and for technology education for our senior patrons.

Computers and Laptops

The purchase of computers and laptops will allow students to use these for after school programs, college applications and other classroom learning opportunities. It will be used for our rural



communities as an opportunity to better interact with the various county or city government entities, such as utilities, schools, auditor and treasurer departments and the like.

Wiring Infrastructure installations

Fiber optics installation will have to be done for all the buildings to be connected to the internet. The company (not yet contracted) will run wiring to establish a stable and reliable connection for the community to use while in the labs, as well as around the baseball fields for live streaming. The current connections that exist are unreliable and very unstable, thus leaving our constituents open for an array of cyberattacks, via malware and the like. With this installation completed, these communities will have something that has never existed. This fiber optic internet connectivity will also lay the foundation for people in the rural areas to develop small internet-based businesses.

Software

These funds will be used to purchase a plethora of software programs to be uploaded on the computers that will allow the users to create reports, résumés, fill out forms as well as other items for the purpose of uplifting the technological structure for the community.

Our mission is dedicated to enriching lives and connecting communities through diverse recreational opportunities. This will give us the opportunity to fulfill the needs of the communities.

Non-Profit Assistance

Epworth Children's Home - **Awarded**

Epworth Children's Home is a unique institution in terms of its security needs. Children and older youth live on its two campuses 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, along with staff who provide their care. Both Epworth's Millwood Avenue location and its Trenholm Road campus are in busy parts of Columbia where there is potential entry onto the campuses from uninvited outsiders.

During the Covid pandemic, it was clear that Epworth's security necessitated a considerable update. These needs continue today. Many of Epworth's residents come from families in which abuse, violence, and family dysfunction have been a constant issue during their young lives. These young people are placed at Epworth to enjoy a stable, nurturing place to live.

Often due to the dysfunctional households from which these children come, there is a problem with family members who come illegally onto the Epworth campus and try to locate their children. This situation not only provides instability and fear for the children involved, but also for other residents. The issue with parents trying to enter the campuses increased throughout the Covid pandemic and continues today.

Another concern is that Epworth's open campus allows unauthorized entry from individuals in the community. Because of the vital need for increased security, Epworth seeks funding to provide



security cameras and monitoring equipment in residences where its children live. This equipment would offer a huge layer of surveillance and subsequent protection. Epworth is also seeking funding to provide salaries for two security guards, one for each campus, to monitor activity and provide safety. The pandemic changed the security scenario for Epworth and we are seeking funding from Richland County's ARPA program to purchase security equipment and to hire two security guards for the campuses to keep our residents and staff safe from intruders.

Midlands Mediation Center - Awarded

The Community Violence Reduction project empowers local communities to reduce violence and increase civic engagement with data-informed strategies. The project aims to prevent and respond to community violence through mediation, restorative justice practices, conflict coaching, conflict management training and community dialogues. MMC will lead the project in capacity-building efforts (listening sessions), funding community intervention personnel, providing training and professional development for community residents, and hiring and training personnel to administer the programs. Midlands Mediation Center methods incorporate the Cure the Violence model for the interruption, The CDC's model for Preventing Youth Violence and Community Violence, and The NAFCM/JAMS model for Listening Sessions for sustainable change.

MMC will analyze violence clusters and transmission dynamics and use community representatives (leaders and residents) to interrupt transmission and change community norms around the use of violence. Participants receive extensive education and coaching in evidence-based methods of mediation, persuasion, behavior change, and norm change — all of which are essential for limiting the spread of outbreaks of violence. The project participants will present as peers to their community in training and listening sessions.

The strategies taught and modeled through training and dialogues include:

- promoting family environments that support healthy development,
- strengthening youth's conflict engagement skills,
- creating protective community environments, and
- intervening to lessen harm and prevent future risks.

The Listening Sessions will evaluate through focus groups individual actions to thought, project, or product coupled with restorative practices allowing individuals to focus more on the harm caused through structures, practices, or policies.

Provide additional context regarding salaries and rental spaces.

Project Lead \$38,250 / \$45 per hour * 850 hours

Trainers & Facilitators \$21,800

- program listening sessions \$1000 @ 5 = \$5,000
- training session @ 12 = \$4000



- Strategic planning session \$1,800
 - Community Townhall Meetings \$500.00 @ 20= \$10,000;
- Contractors / Services and Community: \$33,420
- Training Designer \$5,000
 - Data Analyst: (proximately \$150.00 per hour, approximately 50 hours \$7,550)
 - Research Assistant: \$45 per hour for approximately 52 hours (\$2,340)
- Space (Rental / Community Centers) \$15,250
- Rental space for townhalls and community listening sessions - \$6,500
 - Local community center training sites - \$2,400
 - MMC Office space (administrative) - \$6,360

The Cooperative Ministry - Awarded

The requested premium pay will help to acknowledge and compensate staff's continued commitment to serving our community. Our services have been deemed essential, and we have remained open throughout the pandemic to help Richland County residents remain safely and stably housed. Local and federal government agencies, faith congregations, and private charities have relied on us to administer nearly \$600,000 in housing and food assistance. The public-facing nature of our services has placed our staff at increased risk; 17 of our 18 staff members have experienced 1 or more confirmed cases of COVID.

Our focus population remains at high risk for negative outcomes as pandemic recovery benefits—e.g., stimulus payments, child tax credits, enhanced SNAP (food stamps), and Medicaid coverage—expire. We expect that requests for assistance will increase as household incomes decline. Premium pay will help to retain well experienced and deeply compassionate staff to infuse our community's most vulnerable households with resources and hope to thrive.

Specific objectives:

- 1) Prevent unscheduled closures or other service limitations due to lack of staff.
- 2) Limit staff attrition due to pandemic-related job stressors to 5% or less.
- 3) Sustain current productivity as measured by total number of persons served and percentage of persons served who meet their participation goals.

Success will be measured by the impact of premium pay on staff retention, attendance, productivity, and morale. Our Finance Department will provide bi-monthly payroll summaries of hours worked and wages/salaries earned. The summaries will also report time off by category— i.e., sick, vacation, holiday, personal, other. Staff morale will be assessed semi-annually using a 10-question survey. Descriptive statistics will be used to report the number and demographics of persons served, counts and categories of services provided, funds expended by service category, and comparisons of pre- and post-pandemic service data.