

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 19, 2021

TO: Administration & Finance Committee

FROM: Montana James, Emily Harris-Shears, Community Development Division

RE: Program Year 2021 Affordable Housing Trust Fund Innovation Funding Round Recommendations

Community Planning, Development & Innovation staff members and Councilmember Mirtha Becerra reviewed **three** applications received in the first funding round for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Requests exceeded the available \$300,000 allocation by \$145,250.

Innovation Funding Round Vision

The Affordable Housing Resident Oversight Committee approved the Innovation Funding Round vision on August 11, 2021. The primary purpose and vision of the Innovation Funding Round was to respond to community need for housing solutions in real time, distribute funds to projects that are ready to begin or in process outside of the planned funding cycle and refine the application approach before the Unified Application in winter of 2022.

Application Process and Support

Applications were accepted from Monday, August 23, 2021, through Friday, September 24, 2021. A funding workshop was hosted on Wednesday, August 25, 2021 on Zoom and shared on YouTube. An application page with materials and an Ask a Question feature was created on [Engage Missoula](#) as a resource for applicants. The Affordable Housing Trust Fund Administrator, Emily Harris-Shears provided technical assistance to applicants throughout the open funding round.

Application Scoring Criteria

The scoring committee used a standardized rubric that was published with application materials to award points in ten categories:

- Project design
- Demonstrated knowledge of community need
- Impact and Outcomes
- Financial feasibility
- Timeliness/readiness
- Committed match fund (Staff scoring)
- Completeness of application (Staff scoring)
- Preventing displacement (Bonus)
- Innovation (Bonus)
- Funding Request Type (Bonus)

Funding Recommendation

Community Development staff on behalf of the scoring committee recommend and ask the Mayor and Missoula City Council to approve awarding one Affordable Housing Trust Fund grant to the United Way of Missoula County for **\$26,250** to operate the Centralized Housing Solutions Fund (CHSF). The CHSF is an eligible project under **Consumer Housing Services**.

The Centralized Housing Solutions Fund is a flexible financial assistance fund intended to divert households from the houselessness system in Missoula. It is available for households who identify it as a need for resolving their housing crisis through diversion or rapid exit conversations.

Rationale:

The scoring committee elevated strengths of the Centralized Housing Solutions Fund including the flexibility and proven efficacy of the model, the readiness to be deployed to support households in returning to housing and the high level of impact and ability to serve a high number of people for a relatively small investment as the primary reasons for recommending it for funding.

Impact to Affordable Housing Trust Fund Balance:

The \$273,750 not allocated during this award cycle will remain in the balance of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and will be available for award making in the Unified Application round that will open in the winter of 2022.