



Chattanooga Regional
Homeless Coalition

Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition
600 N. Holtzclaw
Chattanooga, TN 37404
423-710-1501
homelesscoalition.org

May 3, 2019

Chattanooga Interagency Council on Homelessness Co-Chairs
Betsy McCright and Donna Maddox

Dear CICH Co-Chairs,

During the spring of 2018, just a little over a year ago and around the same time that we moved forward with new leadership, Mayor Andy Berke through Executive Order announced the creation of the Chattanooga Interagency Council on Homelessness (CICH). The Mayor called a meeting with leadership and service providers from the homeless system to introduce this new body and to answer questions. Of course, as was addressed by the consultants hired to help with the development of the Homelessness Action Plan, concern was expressed about how this was seemingly a duplication of the coordinating activities led by us, the Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition (CRHC), lead agency of this region's Continuum of Care (CoC). Furthermore, this was a topic already addressed by the CoC's Governance Council a few months earlier when it was proposed by the City to split the CoC by having a separate CoC for the City of Chattanooga apart from the rest of the region. The Governance Council was opposed to splitting the CoC and did not want the City to lead their coordinating activities. The consultants from Analytical Insight also heard similar concerns regarding the City's relationship to the homeless system from the key informant interviews, and that is why we are now here discussing the need for a backbone agency that is not the City.

Any agency performing those coordinating activities that is not the CRHC is going to be a duplication to the CRHC and the CoC. That does not mean though that the CRHC can implement the Homeless Action Plan alone. Our Executive Director, Wendy Winters, has expressed her gratitude many times in community meetings and even in the Chattanooga Times Free Press for the City's efforts to bring new stakeholders from different sectors together during a rebuilding year for the CRHC. In fact, City staff, led by Tyler Yount and Sam Wolfe, have proven to be excellent collaborators in helping us make progress towards our goal, aligned with the federal strategic plan to end homelessness, of ensuring that homelessness in our community is rare, brief and nonrecurring. CICH's Homeless Action Plan even adopted this goal as the vision statement for the plan, and CICH members have already been folded into some of our existing CoC led committees that are working on this shared goal.

It is clear that CICH goals align with CRHC/CoC goals. The CRHC may even stand to gain the most compared to other applicants because we are unique to any other agency in that funding for CICH activities could serve as match for our existing activities due to that close goal alignment. Still, the only



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funding we are aware of is the \$150,000.00 applied for through the City's BFO process for the new fiscal year. That is very little for what is being asked of the backbone agency in the RFP.

Looking at the role of the backbone agency, the first three activities outlined in the RFP, guide vision and strategy, support aligned activities, and establish shared measurement practices, are exactly those coordinating activities we are already performing. In accordance with HUD standards, we measure the community's performance as a coordinated system. We also play an integral part in the system's planning process. We do this by ensuring that our community's coordinated system has the knowledge it needs to interpret and use system performance measures to make improvements, which includes making sure access to services is offered equitably to all people experiencing homelessness.

Our concerns with the RFP lie in the other 3 activities: build public will, advance policy, and mobilize funding. Our organization does not have the capacity to tackle those activities alone. The RFP states that "homelessness is a complex issue that no single organization can solve alone." Still, one agency is being asked to do so with very little support.

We ask that you consider what has been said in this letter and perhaps take another look at what is being asked of the backbone agency and whether changes to the RFP are necessary to avoid duplication and to accomplish our shared goals. We welcome the opportunity for you to meet with our Executive Director and Executive Board members.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Wendy Winters
Elizabeth Hill
[Signature] *[Signature]*
[Signature]

Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition
Board of Directors
Executive Committee Members