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Procedures for Inviting and Reviewing Applications for Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Funding

- I. Steps to be Taken in Preparation for the City of Canton's Annual Action Plan
 - A. Preparation of Timeline, Application Guidance, Application Form, and Scoring Form. The City of Canton's federal fiscal year begins July 1 of each year. According to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations, the City of Canton must submit its Annual Action Plan to HUD by May 15 following a 30-day comment period. The Annual Action Plan is the application to HUD detailing the City's use of federal funding from HUD programs, including Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). Each year, in preparation for its submission of the Annual Action Plan, the City will:
 1. Collaborate with the Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County's (HCCSC's) Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee to prepare an application package to be completed by all applicants for ESG funding. This package will include the application guidance, application form, and scoring form. Once prepared, the committee will forward these documents to the HCCSC Board for approval. The Board will then send approved copies to the City;
 2. Set the date for an application workshop, if scheduled;
 3. Set the deadline for applications;
 4. Collaborate with, and set a deadline for, the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee to review, score, and rank applications; provide scores and feedback to applicants upon request; and submit its ranking recommendations to the HCCSC Board for approval; and
 5. Set the date by which the HCCSC Board will forward its approved ranking to the City.
 - B. Publication of Application and Scoring Forms. Following HCCSC Board approval of the application guidance, application form, and scoring form, HCCSC's Collaborative Applicant will post these documents on HCCSC's website.
 - C. Establishment of Funding Priorities. Each year, prior to the application deadline, the HCCSC Board will recommend to the City priorities by project type for ESG funding. The Board's recommendations will be informed by HCCSC's System Performance Committee.
 - D. Application Workshop and/or Dissemination of Pertinent Information. Each year, the City or designee will have the authority to decide whether to hold a workshop for

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prospective ESG applicants. If no workshop is held, the City or designee will commit to providing individual technical assistance to each applicant as needed. The City will observe the following guidelines:

1. Notice of Workshop. If the City decides to host an application workshop, at least two weeks beforehand, the City will:
 - a. Place a boxed advertisement about the workshop in the *Canton Repository*;
 - b. Send a press release about the workshop to all newspapers of general circulation in Stark County; and
 - c. Mail a notice of the workshop to all current ESG subrecipients.
2. Information to Share with Prospective Applicants. The following information will be disseminated to prospective applicants, either at an application workshop or through electronic communication if no workshop is held:
 - a. The application form that all applicants must complete;
 - b. The application guidance, including procedures and timelines for submitting applications;
 - c. HCCSC priorities for ESG funding as approved by the HCCSC Board and City; and
 - d. The scoring form that will be used to rate the applications.
- E. Application Review Process. The City or the Collaborative Applicant will provide copies of all applications submitted by the deadline to the Chair of the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee for official review. In the reviewing and scoring process, the following guidelines will apply:
 1. The HCCSC Board-approved scoring form will be used to score all applications.
 2. Applications determined to be ineligible will be returned to the applicant with feedback from reviewers.
 3. At a minimum, the following three individuals will independently review and score the applications: the Chair of the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee and one representative from each the City and the Collaborative Applicant. Additional reviewers may be recruited from among the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee members.

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4. The City will contact representatives of each applicant organization to solicit additional information, as needed, about the organization and the program for which the organization is seeking ESG funding.
5. In scoring applications, the reviewers will consider:
 - a. The applications themselves, including their accuracy and completeness;
 - b. Recent monthly status reports submitted by the applicant and annual reporting data;
 - c. Recent on-site reviews of the applicant conducted by the Collaborative Applicant;
 - d. HUD monitoring reviews and agency responses; and
 - e. Any other information or materials that the reviewers deem relevant.
6. The reviewers may assign responsibility to review and evaluate discrete portions of the applications and the status reports to particular Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee members or to the City and rely on those evaluations in scoring applicants on related criteria;
7. After the reviewers have independently scored the applications, they will convene to calculate an average score and reach a consensus on a proposed score for each application and discuss any additional comments or issues.
8. The Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee will meet to discuss the reviewers' proposed score for each application.
9. On each scoring form, the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee will include any comments or suggestions that the applicant should consider in planning for the future of its program(s) or applying for ESG funds, either in the current year or in the future.
10. In determining the final ranking for ESG funding, the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee will consider the final scores of applications as well as the established priorities for funding that year. The committee will vote on a final ranking of applications. That ranking will be submitted to the HCCSC Board for its approval and then to the City of Canton. As the recipient of the ESG funds, the City will have the final authority to determine the order in which projects are ranked for funding.

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- F. Notice of Recommendation. The City shall notify all applicants of the funding recommendations. This notification will follow the HUD required 30-day public comment period and submission of the Annual Action Plan to HUD. This may either be done via email or letter.