



## ***I. Demonstrated Need***

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**1. What is the need/opportunity being addressed by this program/project and how does that contribute to CDBG's national objectives?**

The Steps to End Domestic Violence, Safe Tonight project addresses the need for safe housing for those who are homeless as a result of domestic violence, through the provision of emergency housing and support services designed to prevent and address homelessness and foster economic self-sufficiency. This project addresses the CDBG national objective of benefitting low/moderate income limited clientele – “battered spouses.” In fiscal year 2022, Steps to End Domestic Violence provided emergency housing to 192 adults and 99 children fleeing from domestic violence for a total of 26,557 bednights.

The Safe Tonight project contributes to CDBG's national objectives through the provision of emergency and transitional housing services to a subpopulation of people presumed by HUD to be low/moderate income. Steps to End Domestic Violence is the only emergency shelter in Chittenden County that provides the unique and critical services specifically for victims of domestic violence. Additionally, this project contributes to the city's CDBG objective of protecting the vulnerable, which specifically includes victims of domestic violence.

## ***II. Program/Project Design***

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**1. Give us a short summary (2 sentences) that describe the program/project.**

This project will use CDBG funds to provide emergency housing and support services to adults and children fleeing domestic violence. While in emergency housing, people experiencing domestic violence have access to our advocates who can assist with finding and securing safe, permanent housing, increase self-sufficiency and establish economic independence.

**2. Explain why the program activities are the right strategies to use to achieve the intended outcomes. Why is the program designed the way it is? (cite evidence, best practices, or community input)**

According to [www.Domesticshelters.org](http://www.Domesticshelters.org), “Housing instability is both a contributing factor to and a consequence of experiencing domestic violence” and in a country that is already in a housing crisis, more than 1/3 of domestic violence survivors experience homelessness after leaving their abusive partners (August 17, 2022, “VAWA should fund more housing, not more policing”). People who experience domestic violence also face additional economic and emotional hurdles to exiting homelessness. Best practices suggest that victims of domestic violence experience higher levels of success in leaving an abusive situation and securing independent housing when receiving trauma-informed support from domestic violence advocates trained in crisis intervention and strengths-based advocacy.

Many local programs lack this expertise or simply do not have facilities that provide the appropriate level of security and confidentiality to meet the unique safety needs of those fleeing domestic violence. The services provided by Steps to End Domestic Violence are specifically designed to respond to the emotional and physical needs of victims of domestic violence, providing trauma-informed access to emergency and post-crisis housing and supportive services based on national best practices guidance. Meeting the housing needs for those who have experienced domestic violence can be particularly difficult. In addition to physical, emotional and or sexual abuse, economic abuse is a common tactic of abusers,

which can leave a victim with few or no economic resources. Poor employment, credit, and housing histories, due to the behavior of an abusive partner, can leave victims feeling that they have no choice but to stay with, or return to the abusive partner. When they do leave, they are at risk for prolonged homelessness since these issues take time to repair, longer than the time available in an emergency shelter or Safehome. Steps to End Domestic Violence regularly advocates on behalf of victims to landlords, helps connect victims to funds for back rent, security deposits, and other needs, as well as facilitates enrollment in matched savings and other financial programs. Steps' Advocates use an empowerment model framework to provide a trauma-informed support plan tailored to meet each survivor's individual needs.

**3. How will this program/project contribute to the City's anti-poverty strategy? If this activity is to respond to COVID-19, please also describe how this activity prepares or responds to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

The services provided through this project address the city's goals of providing public service to homeless individuals (2018 Consolidated Plan, pg 144). This project addresses meeting basic needs and stabilizing living situations, including access to and retention of affordable housing for some of the city's most vulnerable residents. In addition, the support services we provide, including trauma-informed emotional support and advocacy, address the city's goal of mitigating the long-term collateral consequences of crime on victims. Stable housing helps to alleviate the impacts of other aspects of one's life including lack of childcare, education and employment, which in turn facilitates economic self-sufficiency and long-term stability.

As stated above, Steps to End Domestic Violence's expanded emergency shelter facilities provide safe, secure non-congregate emergency housing for some of our most marginalized community members - people fleeing domestic violence. Transitioning to our larger, non-congregate facility with individual living space and 24/7 onsite security and supportive services ensures that Steps is able to maintain emergency shelter and comprehensive support services throughout the continued challenges of COVID-19 and other health issues.

**4. How do you use community and/or participant input in planning the program design and activities?**

For almost 50 years, Steps to End Domestic Violence has been serving victims of domestic violence in Chittenden County. As the only agency in Chittenden County providing these specialized services, we work closely with many community partners and key stakeholders. Participant input is fundamental and primary to our work with every person we serve. We solicit feedback from service users throughout their experience working with us and regularly engage with community members to develop and improve resources through meetings, anonymous surveys, and interviews. Our approach is to provide trauma-informed, survivor-driven services by creating space for them to establish their own priorities and goals within the framework of services we provide. Access to affordable, safe housing is consistently identified as a primary need.

### ***III. Proposed Outcomes***

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**1. What are the intended outcomes for this project/program? How are people meant to be better off as a result of participating?**

The intended outcomes of the Safe Tonight project are to ensure immediate, safe, stable housing, and necessary crisis services for those fleeing domestic violence and to assist in the

transition to or maintenance of permanent, safe, stable housing through economic self-sufficiency and long-term stability. We anticipate serving 287 adults and 188 children in the program year through this CDBG funded program.

Households engaging in housing and economic support services with Steps' advocates will be less likely to return to homelessness and better able to quickly access resources necessary to re-stabilize their situations when challenges arise. They will feel more connected to their community and will achieve increased financial self-sufficiency to maintain stability.

**2. List your goals/objectives, activities to implement and expected outcomes (# of units, # of individuals, etc.)**

Goal/Objective	Activity Funded	Outcomes
Emergency and transitional housing is provided to victims of domestic violence fleeing their homes	<p><b>Shelter Coordinator</b> - 10 hours/week: Oversight of emergency shelter operations, intakes, 24/7 access; facilitation and coordination of COVID-related policies and provision of services and resources</p> <p><b>Emergency Housing Advocate position</b>- 5 hours/week: Assist with emergency housing screenings, placement, intakes (move ins), ongoing support coordination and facilitation</p> <p><b>Shelter Advocate position</b> – 5 hours/week: Assist with intakes and access to resources households may need during transition</p>	Burlington residents fleeing domestic violence have access to safe, confidential and supportive shelter/transitional housing. We anticipate serving 192 adults and 99 children in the one-year grant period.
Staff provide comprehensive services to victims of domestic violence in emergency housing and for those who are homeless or marginally housed.	<p><b>Shelter Coordinator</b> - 10 hours/week: Oversight of emergency shelter, supportive service assessments and provision, information/referral, housing support, oversight of Steps Shelter Support Team</p> <p><b>Emergency Housing Advocate position</b>- 5 hours/week: Assist with intakes, supportive services planning and execution, referral services and plan coordination; access to community resources</p> <p><b>Housing Retention Advocate</b> – 5 hours/week: Assist with intakes, supportive services, housing transition and stability support</p> <p><b>Shelter Advocate position</b> – 5 hours/week: Assist with intakes, supportive services, and access to resources households may need during transition</p>	Shelter residents will have assistance with basic needs and access to Steps' supportive services. Safehome residents in motels and those homeless/marginally housed will receive supportive services. We anticipate serving 192 adults and 99 children in the emergency housing program. We also anticipate serving 95 Burlington adults and 89 Burlington children who are homeless or marginally housed in the community. Therefore, the total number of people we anticipate serving is 475.
Staff work with victims of domestic violence to find permanent housing, including people in emergency housing and homeless in the community.	<p><b>Emergency Housing Advocate position</b>- 5 hours/week: Intakes, supportive services, application assistance</p> <p><b>Housing Retention Advocate</b> – 5 hours/week: intake, supportive services, housing transition and stability support</p> <p><b>Shelter Advocate position</b> – 5 hours/week: Assist with intakes, supportive services, paperwork completion, and access to resources households may need during transition</p>	Victims of domestic violence who are homeless/marginally housed can find safe, permanent and sustainable housing. We anticipate 110 Burlington community residents (50 adults and 60 children) will move into permanent housing in the one-year grant period.

## ***IV. Impact / Evaluation***

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- 1. How do you assess whether/how program participants are better off? Describe how you assess project/program outcomes; your description should include: what type of data, the method/tool for collecting the data, from whom you collect data, and when it is collected.**

For many years, Steps to End Domestic Violence has been using a self-sufficiency matrix (SSM) to evaluate shelter and Safehome residents at various stages, including at entry to the program, after 28 days, after 90 days, and when they exit the program. The SSM measures the capacity of these participants to manage essential life skills as well as their level of self-sufficiency in fundamental areas including community involvement, safety, shelter/housing, parenting, adult education, childcare, mobility, children's education, personal finances, income, family/social relations, legal status, life skills, employment, food, disabilities, legal needs, health care coverage, mental health, substance use, and job search skills. The SSM scales the level of need in each area, allowing staff to make internal and external referrals, as appropriate. The SSM also assists these participants to clearly identify the aspects of their life in which they may need assistance as they move towards increased self-sufficiency. Based on feedback from project beneficiaries as well as staff, Steps has developed a revised version of the SSM to support more accurate review of growth and progress towards goals based on beneficiary-identified priorities. This feedback was received through individual and group surveys and interviews and has been tested in partnership with current service users.

- 2. How successful has the project/program been during the most recent reporting year for your CDBG project? Report the number of beneficiaries you intended to serve with which activities (as noted in your last Attachment A) and your final outcomes (as noted on your Attachment C) from June 2022 (or June 2021). For non-CDBG participants – report on your achievements from the previous year.**

The Safe Tonight program served 793 individuals in the 2020-2022 grant period, slightly less than the 899 we proposed in our 2020 application. The numbers were impacted by a variety of factors related to COVID-19 including staff pausing shelter entries, survivors unable to leave their current homes because the perpetrators were constantly present, and low availability of permanent housing because evictions were not enforced during the height of COVID-19. We were able to assist 230 people to enter permanent housing during the two-year grant period, which is more than 90% of our projections. Based on the traditional SSM results, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being in-crisis and 5 being completely self-sufficient), the mean number reported at entry into the program in "shelter/housing" was a 1.04. The average participant number upon exit increased to 2.57. Advocates are having success finding permanent housing despite Vermont having the lowest vacancy rates in the country and Burlington having a vacancy rate of less than 1%, specifically 0.43% (*Vermont Biz*, 2/28/2020, "Vermont has lowest vacancy rate in nation").

## ***V. Experience / Organizational Capacity***

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- 1. What is your agency's mission, and how do the proposed activities fit with your mission?**

The mission of Steps to End Domestic Violence is to assist in the transition to a safe, independent life for all those who have been affected physically, sexually, emotionally, or economically by domestic abuse and to promote a culture that fosters justice, equity and

safety. The safety and stability provided by emergency housing, along with supportive services are an essential first step to a safe and independent life.

**2. Explain how your agency has the capacity to carry out the proposed activity (i.e. staff qualifications, years of experience related to this type of activity, etc.)**

Steps to End Domestic Violence has operated an emergency shelter in Burlington since 1983, providing expertise to other domestic violence agencies nationwide on best practices for operating a low barrier domestic violence shelter. In 2020, Steps to End Domestic Violence partnered with Champlain Housing Trust to purchase, renovate and open a new, expanded, non-congregate shelter and administrative space to better meet the needs of survivors in the Burlington community. All Steps to End Domestic Violence staff are required to attend a formal twenty-hour crisis worker training that encompasses trauma-informed, culturally competent service provision to those who have experienced domestic violence. This is complemented by on-the-job training in their program area as well as ongoing professional development through additional trainings and conferences. Steps to End Domestic Violence is and has been the recipient of a variety of local, state, and federal grants and has a proven track record in financial grant management.

In the current fiscal year, Steps is proud to have been awarded the exclusive contract with AHS-OEO for management of the motel pool funds to meet overflow shelter needs of any/all individuals fleeing domestic violence. As a result of our successful management of the expanded emergency shelter, the Department of Children & Family has awarded us funding to manage support services and motel lodging for survivors who are unable to stay in our shelter as a result of eligibility restrictions, safety concerns and/or lack of shelter availability.

Steps is led by Executive Director, Nicole Kubon, and Director of Housing Services, Ciara Kilburn. They have combined experience of over 20 years in the areas of domestic violence support services, emergency housing provision and/or housing supportive services in New York and Vermont. Both have served as leaders at Steps for 3 years and led organizational efforts to expand shelter capacity, ensure consistency and quality of services. Our Executive Director was a lead participant in the development of the CCHA's coordinated entry system.

**3. What steps has your organization/board taken in the past year to address racial equity, inclusion, and belonging internally? What new commitments have been made to address racial equity, inclusion, and belonging internally in the year ahead?**

Steps to End Domestic Violence has focused on racial equity, justice, inclusion, and belonging in several ways, beginning with the implementation of an annual, three-part training on equity, justice and inclusion for all members of Steps staff and board. In addition, Steps' internal Equity & Justice Alliance (a workgroup of staff focused on ensuring commitment, progress, and continued conversation) has continued our organizational audit (developed by The Puget Sound Cohort of Race Forward) in order to better identify where our internal work should focus. In the past year, Steps has updated its hiring practices and has enhanced employee benefits to encourage diversity in its staffing and board composition. Steps has also begun the process of developing an Advisory Board to ensure that ongoing policies, practices and priorities are informed by current and previous service users of diverse experiences and backgrounds.

4. Have you received Federal or State grant funds in the past three years?  Yes  No
5. Were the activities funded by these sources successfully completed?  Yes  No  
 N/A If No, please explain:

**VI. Proposed Low & Moderate Income Beneficiaries**

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1. Will the program solely serve a specific group of people? If so, check **ONE** below:

- Abused Children  Elderly (62 years +)  People with AIDS  
 Battered Spouses  Homeless Persons  Illiterate Adults  
 People with Severe Disabilities

2. a. For your proposed project, please estimate how the **Burlington residents** will break out into the following income categories during the total grant period. Use the Income Table at <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CEDO/2022-HUD-Income-Limits>

Service / Activity	Unduplicated Total # of Burlington HH / Persons to be Served	# Extremely Low-Income (30% median)	# Very Low-Income (50% median)	# Low-Income (80% median)	# Above Income Limits (above 80% median)
Emergency/Transitional Housing and supportive services are provided to victims of domestic violence fleeing from their homes	192 Adults 99 Children	192 Adults 99 Children			
Staff work with Burlington Residents, not housed in our Transitional or Emergency Housing Program, to find permanent housing	95 Adults 89 Children	95 Adults 89 Children			
Total number victims of domestic violence to be served in FY23	287 Adults 188 Children	287 Adults 188 Children			

b. All CDBG grantees serving limited clientele will be required to use CEDO’s **CDBG Beneficiary Self-Certification** form to collect beneficiary data including race, ethnicity, annual income, and family size. Is your organization willing and prepared to add this documentation to the intake process for your CDBG funded program by July 1, 2023?  
 Yes  NO  Not Serving Limited Clientele

**VII. Commitment to Equity, Inclusion and Belonging**

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1. Who is the project/program designed to benefit? Describe the project/program’s target population, citing (if relevant) specific age, gender, income, community/location, race or ethnicity, or other characteristic of the people this program is intended to serve. How do you select and reach your target population?

The Safe Tonight Project is designed to benefit all victims of domestic violence who come into our emergency housing program or are Burlington residents who are homeless/marginally housed. There is no “typical” victim of domestic violence as it impacts people across all races, ethnicities, ages, genders, income levels, locations, religious affiliations, etc. Our data shows that the majority of our beneficiaries low or extremely low-income, and HUD presumes that victims of domestic violence are principally extremely low-income, thus our program reflects

the needs of extremely low-income victims of domestic violence. In FY22, we provided education programming and outreach to educators, healthcare professionals, social service organizations, military personnel, legal staff/lawyers, as well as through an extensive and growing social media presence. We work diligently with community partners to ensure awareness of the services we provide and availability of materials to notify survivors of how to access our services. We are also available to provide information via our 24/7 hotline.

**2. Describe the steps you take to ensure the project/program is accessible, inclusive, addressing racially equity, and culturally appropriate for the target population.**

Steps to End Domestic Violence continuously audits its services and organizational culture to improve and expand access for all people impacted by domestic violence in our community. We know that despite there being no typical victim, people in marginalized communities often face additional barriers after experiencing domestic violence. According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence ([www.nnedv.org](http://www.nnedv.org)), our movement has historically minimized the voices and needs of marginalized community members, especially Black survivors (February 8, 2022, "Celebrating Black-led organizations"). Steps makes consistent efforts to receive feedback from those we serve as well as from community partners that provide comprehensive support services to a variety of diverse audiences. We also review statistics from our community and compare it to those we serve to identify gaps and develop plans for addressing disparities. We prioritize funding for translation services, and we work to ensure we have culturally specific supplies for our shelter residents. Staff receive training annually to ensure cultural humility.

## ***VIII. Budget / Financial Feasibility***

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**1. Budget Narrative: Provide a clear description of what you will do with CDBG's investment in the project/program. How will you spend the money? Specific details.**

Steps to End Domestic Violence seeks CDBG funding to support our housing and economic empowerment advocacy services. The funding requested will be used to support the salary and fringe benefits of several integral positions in these areas of programming. Steps is seeking partial support of the following positions: Shelter Coordinator, Emergency Housing Advocate, Housing Retention Advocate and Shelter Advocate.

Each of these positions supports victims of domestic violence who are seeking emergency housing, are experiencing homelessness or housing instability as a result of domestic violence. The Shelter Coordinator focuses on ensuring smooth shelter operations and coordination of resources and services within our emergency shelter. The Emergency Housing Advocate and the Housing Retention Advocate provide support to residents, Safehome participants, and community-based survivors experiencing housing instability or homelessness. These advocates ensure that all survivors receive immediate crisis intervention support and are subsequent access to appropriate resources to re-stabilize. The Shelter Advocate position focuses on immediate and basic needs of residents in our emergency shelter. This Advocate prioritizes support for households in shelter who need access to medical services, food, cleaning supplies, school supplies, computer/iPad for virtual appointments and meetings, etc.

\* Fringe benefits include taxes, health, vision and dental insurance, Employee Assistance Program, retirement benefits, etc.



**2. If you plan to pay for staff with CDBG funding, describe what they do in relation to the specific service(s) / activity(ies) in your Project/Program Design.**

a.

Specific Service / Activity	Position/Title	Work Related to CDBG-Funded Activity	# of Hours per Week spent on this Specific Service / Activity	% of Hours per Week spent on this Specific Service / Activity to be paid with CDBG
Emergency/Transitional Housing and supportive services are provided to victims of domestic violence fleeing from their homes	<b>Shelter Coordinator</b>	Oversight of emergency shelter, intakes, supportive service provision, information/referral, housing support, oversight of Steps Shelter Support Team; facilitation and coordination of policies and provision of services and resources	<b>10 hours</b>	<b>25%</b>
Emergency/Transitional Housing and supportive services are provided to victims of domestic violence fleeing from their homes	<b>Emergency Housing Advocate</b>	Intakes, supportive services, resource access, next-step housing options	<b>10 hours</b>	<b>25%</b>
Emergency/Transitional Housing and supportive services are provided to victims of domestic violence fleeing from their homes	<b>Shelter Advocate</b>	Assist with intakes, supportive services, and access to resources households may need during transition	<b>5 hours</b>	<b>12.5%</b>
Staff work with Burlington Residents, not housed in our Transitional or Emergency Housing Program, to find permanent housing	<b>Housing Retention Advocate</b>	Intakes, supportive service provision, housing support, economic stability programming, resource navigation assistance	<b>10 hours</b>	<b>25%</b>

**b. All CDBG grantees that use CDBG funds for salaries must submit timesheets that capture total time and effort of staff members funded with CDBG. These timesheets must record hours worked on CDBG-funded programs, hours worked on non-CDBG funded programs and the corresponding program name/funding source(s). Timecards must include a narrative for all CDBG and non-CDBG funded activities, and must be signed by the employee and supervisor. Does your organization have the ability to implement a timekeeping system for CDBG funded staff that meets these requirements by July 1, 2023?  X  Yes   No   Not funding salaries**

**3. Program/Project Budget**

Line Item	CDBG Funds	Other	Total
Salary and Benefits for Emergency Housing and Housing Retention Staff	\$ 67,336	\$ 665,092	\$ 732,428
Occupancy Costs	\$ 0	\$ 166,402	\$ 166,402
Professional Fees & Subcontracts	\$ 0	\$ 54,523	\$ 54,523
Program Expenses	\$ 0	\$ 14,619	\$ 14,619
Rental Assistance	\$ 0	\$ 167,772	\$ 167,772

Shelter Overflow Lodging Funds	\$0	\$1,100,000	\$1,100,000
Other	\$ 0	\$ 8,786	\$ 8,786
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$67,336</b>	<b>\$ 2,177,194</b>	<b>\$ 2,244,530</b>

**4. Funding Sources**

	Program/Project		Agency	
	Current (FY23)	Projected (FY24)	Current (FY23)	Projected (FY24)
CDBG	\$ 59,321	\$ 67,336	\$ 59,321	\$ 67,336
<b>State (specify)</b>				
VCCVS State			\$ 114,350	\$ 114,350
DV/SV Omnibus & EA	\$ 4,289	\$ 4,289	\$ 48,815	\$ 48,815
HOP/ESG State	\$ 1,039,864	\$ 1,619,032	\$1,039,864	\$ 1,619,032
<b>Federal (specify)</b>				
STOP			\$ 29,308	\$ 29,308
Transitional Housing	\$117,085	\$117,085	\$ 117,085	\$ 117,085
CoC Rapid Rehousing	\$ 165,056	\$ 165,056	\$ 165,945	\$ 165,945
VOCA	\$ 32,275	\$ 32,275	\$ 65,731	\$ 65,731
FVPSA	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 79,860	\$ 79,860
FEMA	\$ 10,454	\$ 10,454	\$ 10,454	\$ 10,454
Consolidated Youth Grant	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 166,655	\$ 166,655
United Way	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
<b>Private (specify)</b>				
Private/Corporate Foundations	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 321,675	\$ 351,675
Town Funding	\$ 35,403	\$ 35,403	\$ 35,403	\$ 35,403
Fundraising	\$ 65,008	\$ 65,008	\$273,150	\$ 285,983
Program Income	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
<b>Other (specify)</b>				
COVID Grants	\$23,607	\$13,607	\$ 76,052	\$ 55,017
Training/Supervision Stipends/In-kind	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,400	\$ 3,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,675,362</b>	<b>\$ 2,252,545</b>	<b>\$ 2,627,068</b>	<b>\$ 3,236,049</b>

**5. Of the total program/project cost, what percentage will be financed with CDBG?**

$$\frac{\$ 67,336}{\text{CDBG Funding}} \div \frac{\$ 2,244,530}{\text{Total Program/Project Costs}} = \underline{3} \% \text{ Percentage}$$

**6. Of the total program/project cost, what would be the total cost per person?**

$$\frac{\$ 2,244,530}{\text{Total Program/Project Cost}} \div \frac{623}{\text{\# Total Proposed Beneficiaries}} = \underline{\$ 3,602.78} \text{ Cost Per Person}$$

$$\frac{\$ 67,336}{\text{Total Amount of CDBG Funding}} \div \frac{475}{\text{\# Total Proposed CDBG Beneficiaries}} = \underline{\$ 141.76} \text{ Cost Per Person CDBG Investment}$$

**7. Why should CDBG resources, as opposed to other sources of funding, be used for this project?**

Domestic violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and their children (The Impact of Safe Housing on Survivors of Domestic Violence - NNEDV). Using CDBG

funds to help victims of domestic violence move into more stable, secure housing demonstrates the city's support for addressing both domestic violence and homelessness in Burlington and falls perfectly in-line with the City's Anti-Poverty Strategy and national and local CDBG objectives.

- 8. Describe your use of community resources, including volunteers. Include any resources not listed in your budget. Will CDBG be used to leverage other resources?**  
Steps to End Domestic Violence relies on volunteers to provide direct services and other organizational support. In-kind donations such as toiletries, food, cleaning supplies and school supplies for children and more help us to fill gaps and meet ongoing need. Funding for CDBG-supported programs is diverse, however, local support for these initiatives helps us leverage state and national support.

## ***IX. Collaboration/Efficiency***

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- 1. Give 1 or 2 examples of key successful collaboration(s) between your program/project and another agency/program/group to address the needs of the people you serve.**  
Steps to End Domestic Violence has an extensive history of strong and successful collaborations with local, state and national partners. In addition to our longstanding partnerships with Vermont Works for Women, ReSource and HOPE Works to provide support to women seeking job opportunities, training and other forms of economic empowerment, 2020 kicked off a more formal partnership with Champlain Housing Trust as we embarked on the acquisition, renovation and opening of our new shelter. This successful collaboration is ongoing and stretches beyond shelter property maintenance. We continue to partner in securing and maintaining permanent housing for survivors in many of CHT's properties. In the current fiscal year, we have built and/or strengthened our relationships with several local school districts as well as Outright VT as we are collaboratively developing infrastructure for improved support services, educational resources and policy guidance for responding to teen dating violence, stalking and exposure to home-based intimate partner violence.
- 2. Do identical or similar community programs exist? How does this program complement or collaborate rather than duplicate services? What makes this program unique?**  
Steps to End Domestic Violence is the only domestic violence service provider in Chittenden County providing critical and specialized emergency housing, transitional housing, rental assistance and economic justice services to survivors. While other emergency shelters exist, all have potential barriers including lack the expertise or facilities to ensure a safe, secure, and trauma-informed environment for domestic violence survivors. Steps maintains strong relationships with these providers to ensure that services are not duplicated and households experiencing homelessness are served by the organization best fit to respond to their needs.
- 3. Provide 1 example of how your agency has become more efficient in achieving your outcomes or managing your project/program.**  
In addition to the ongoing enhancements we have made to our staff wellness supports that have resulted in increased staff retention (as referenced in last year's application), we have been successful in better streamlining access to services available at our agency by improving our training program for hotline advocates to make quicker and easier referrals. We have also been able to simplify the process for admitting individuals into our Safehome program by taking over management of this program from Economic Services.

## **X. Sustainability**

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**1. How will this project have a long-term benefit to the City of Burlington? If this program/project ends, how will that benefit continue?**

The long-term benefit of this project for the City of Burlington is clear. Although Burlington's population makes up approximately 27% of Chittenden County ([Vermont Population Estimates | Vermont Department of Health \(healthvermont.gov\)](#)), 44% of individuals served and over 44% of households receiving emergency housing support by Steps reside in Burlington, by far the highest percentages of any town in Chittenden County.

Steps to End Domestic Violence has provided emergency and supportive services to thousands of individuals who have experienced domestic violence over the past almost 50 years. We have a diverse mix of public and private funding and, although the City's support is critical to our success, we are committed to finding sources of funding to continue services should we lose some or all of the support of the City of Burlington. Additionally, Steps supportive services are focused on providing survivors with long term economic self-sufficiency to support long term stability and decrease likelihood of subsequent episodes of homelessness.

**3. CDBG funding is intended for new or expanded services. If CDBG funding ends, will the project be able to continue?**

While Steps expanded its emergency housing services in Fiscal Year 2021 to provide three times the trauma-informed, empowerment focused housing units and corresponding support in a new, secure shelter, our commitment to providing emergency housing and financial empowerment services to survivors in Chittenden County is longstanding and unwavering. These services will not be discontinued if CDBG funding is discontinued. CDBG funding can ensure the ongoing improvement and expansion of our expert, trauma-informed support services are equally accessible for survivors both within our shelter facility as well as in our Safe Home program.

**4. How will you prioritize the proposed project activities if you do not receive the full amount requested?**

Steps is committed to providing emergency housing as well as housing supportive services to all survivors. Additional funding would be pursued, and efforts would be focused on immediate needs followed by ongoing stabilization services.