City of Cincinnati

801 Plum Street, Suite 356
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Phone (513) 352-5205
Email Jan-Michele.Kearney@cincinnati-oh.gov
Web www.cincinnati-oh.gov

Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney
Vice Mayor

April 28, 2026

MOTION

WE MOVE that the City Administration reserve the amount of $3,271,193 for a bridge-loan program for the purpose of funding Continuum of Care for the Homeless (CoC) programs if federal funding for year 2026-2027 has not arrived by July 1, 2026. This amount is half of the total needed to allow eleven (11) local organizations to continue providing needed services to prevent homelessness and support those experiencing homelessness if the expected five-month delay occurs in receiving funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The proposed bridge loan will be repaid immediately upon receipt of the federal funds. HUD recently announced the awards for all CoCs with funds expiring this quarter, and included on its list for full renewal for the local organizations that the bridge loan would support. *See* Attachment A.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the source of these funds be the remaining funds from the FY 24 Impact Award (Previously allocated to Strategies to End Homelessness) and that the remaining amount needed to reach $3,271,193 be allocated from source(s) recommended by the Administration.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the ordinance names Strategies to End Homelessness (STEH) as the entity with which the City will contract for any disbursal of these funds to organizations operating CoC programs experiencing delay in the receipt of federal CoC funds.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the City Administration prepare the contract necessary to enter into an agreement with Strategies to End Homelessness (STEH), on behalf of organizations that operate CoC programs, to request from the City disbursement(s) of said reserve funds for eligible CoC expenses.

WE FURTHER MOVE that any disbursement of said reserve funds shall be in the form of no-interest bridge loans, to be paid back from STEH to the City, immediately following STEH's receipt of the necessary federal CoC funds.

WE FURTHER MOVE that all subgrantees of the FY24 Impact Award receive their due funding through the remainder of calendar year 2026 prior to the consideration of using the FY24 Impact Award funding for other uses

Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney

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STATEMENT

Each year Continuum of Care for the Homeless (CoC) funds are received locally from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the operation of permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, street outreach and other services to provide households with the opportunity to exit homelessness and remain housed. Current funding for the Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care for the Homeless (OH-500) expires June 30, 2026. While the next annual allotment of funds is needed starting July 1, 2026, it is expected this funding will arrive significantly late.

In the past, when CoC funds arrived a month or two late, organizations used their own reserves, if available, to keep programs afloat, and/or secured short-term loans and paid them back with interest once in receipt of CoC funds. Increasingly, financiers are not willing to loan such funds and the delay in receiving funds is expected to go on longer than in the past.

The 11 organizations operating these 48 programs were surveyed to determine the amount each program will cost to run each month starting July 1, 2026, and for how long the organizations could keep the programs going without CoC funds. Months of solvency, without funds, range from zero to six months.

Starting in July 1, 2026, each month CoC funds do not arrive causes a growing number of programs to be unable to pay their portion of the rent to the landlords providing housing to people who previously experienced homelessness. Landlords will begin filing evictions, hearings will be held and households will lose their homes. Furthermore, with such a funding gap, an increasing number of organizations will have to lay off staff who provide support to help families remain housed or to obtain housing and exit homelessness.

If funding is delayed by five months, 1,463 people will be at risk of losing their housing and returning to homelessness. An additional 673 people could lose services needed to exit homelessness.

Collectively these 11 organizations can float approximately half the cost to keep these 48 life-sustaining programs going for five months without federal funding. The City and Hamilton County have each been recommended to put in reserve enough to collectively split the other approximate half ($6,542,385) of the cost of five months of operations which organizations cannot cover.

Five months of reserve would prevent:

- Loss of housing and return to homelessness for approximately 1,463 people.
- Layoff of social workers and case managers who provide needed services to empower these approximately 927 households to remain housed and will be needed to assist approximately 673 other households in overcoming significant obstacles to exit homelessness.
- Loss of street outreach services specifically for youth ages 24 and younger.
- End of rent payments to landlords for approximately 927 homes in our community.

The following provide reassuring evidence that HUD will provide the promised funds, albeit not by July 1, 2026 (making a short-term bridge loan necessary):

- The inclusion of the Greater Cincinnati Homeless Coalition and other local programs on HUD's list for full renewal of the funds. *See* Attachment A.
- The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026 (H.R. 7148), signed into law on February 3, 2026, that requires that if HUD did not issue award notices to local CoCs by April 1, 2026, HUD must automatically

renew all CoC projects expiring in the second quarter of 2026 for a 12-month period at the previous cycle's funding levels. HUD did not send such notices by April 1 and is required to do the automatic renewal.

- On March 31, 2026, the U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island, as a part of its ruling in *National Alliance to End Homelessness v. Turner, et al.*, ordered that HUD must make available for award the funding previously appropriated for CoC operations.
- On March 31, 2026, as the first step in compliance with this part of the court's ruling, HUD announced renewal funding for local CoCs whose funding expired in quarter one of 2026, including a list of all of those CoCs and the specific dollar amount each would be receiving.