

Policy Briefing Summary

City Council



Regarding: Resolution for Approval of 2026 Homeowner Assistance Grant Program

Staff Contact(s): Leon Henry, Director of Social Services

Presenter: Todd Divers, Commissioner of the Revenue

Date of Proposed Action: May 18, 2026

Issue

Attached is an Appropriation Resolution for the City Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia's ("City Council"), consideration, to provide a Public Grant to the City's "local board" of Social Services, to assist needy persons with ongoing costs of home ownership.

Background / Rule

For some time, City Council has sought to assist low- and moderate-income persons, whose ownership of a home may be in jeopardy due to financial distress associated with the costs of homeownership. This Program seeks to assist those whose status as homeowners is tenuous due to rising transportation, utility and food costs, rising real estate and personal property taxes, and other circumstances that result in costs of homeownership exceeding reasonable portions of a family's income.

Analysis

Pursuant to the provisions of Virginia Code § 63.2-314, City Council may make a Grant of Public Funds to the City's Director of Social Services ("DSS Director"), in their capacity as the "local board," for the purpose of aiding needy persons within the City. Eligibility of homeowners to receive disbursements from this Grant Fund need not be limited to the requirements for any State Public Assistance Programs, or any VHDA Program. Upon City Council's appropriation of funds to the DSS Director, the Public Funds would be deposited in the local treasury to the credit of the local board. The DSS Director, in their capacity as the "local board," will be responsible for dispensing the funds in accordance with specific eligibility requirements. The DSS Director will utilize existing Commissioner of Revenue Office Staff, to assist with processing of applications and determinations of eligibility, using a Cooperative Agreement.

For 2026, the following income parameters are proposed, with relief calculated as flat amounts:

2026 CHAP (Public Grant for Housing Assistance)				
2026 Grantee Household Income Limits	\$0 - \$39,000	\$39,001 - \$52,000	\$52,001 - \$58,500	\$58,501 - \$65,000
Grant	\$2,500	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$1,000

Proposed Eligibility Criteria for this Public Grant:

1. Grantee must be an individual. No applications will be accepted from any company, corporation, partnership, or other form of legal entity (other than a trust, as referenced below), or awarded to any legal entity.
2. Grantee must be the owner of a home within the City. "Ownership" may be any of the following: (i) individually, or in conjunction with a spouse holding life rights, (ii) individually, or in conjunction with a spouse holding the power of revocation in a revocable inter vivos trust of which the home is an asset, or (iii) alone or in conjunction with a spouse who possesses a life estate, or an estate for joint lives, or a continuing right of use or support under the terms of an irrevocable trust of which the property is an asset.
3. Grantee must reside within the home.
4. Maximum value of the home cannot exceed \$550,000 (this is the average assessed value in 2026 of taxable residential parcels, rounded to the nearest \$5,000).
5. Grantee, Grantee's spouse, or any other owner residing in the home cannot own any other interest in real estate, within the City, or at any other location. This includes any real estate interest as: (i) an individual; (ii) as the beneficiary of a trust; (iii) as a member of an LLC; or (iv) by virtue of any other interest in a trust or legal entity.
6. Grantee must demonstrate evidence of household income within the limits established for calendar year 2026.

Financial Impact

The FY27 projected cost of this Program (\$630,000) is funded with the Annual Budget Appropriation for Fiscal Year 2027 approved by City Council.

Recommendation

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution appropriating a Grant of Public Funds for housing assistance to low- and moderate-income homeowners within the City.

Recommended Motion (if Applicable)

"I move the RESOLUTION appropriating a Grant of Public Funds for housing assistance to low- and moderate-income homeowners within the City."

Attachments

1. 2026 Real Estate Assessment Memo Report
2. 2026 CHAP Resolution