



Juneau Economic Stabilization Task
155 S. Seward St.
Juneau, AK 99801

October 12, 2020

Dear Ms. Thomas, Mr. Mertz, and Task Force Members,

The Juneau Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (JCHH) would like to voice support for several projects under consideration at the Juneau Economic Stabilization Task Force. These projects fill gaps exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and we believe fit the criteria for CARES Act funding. They also serve Juneau's most vulnerable populations, and those hit hardest by the trauma of COVID.

The JCHH determined the Youth Emergency Shelter is our top priority:

Tlingit and Haida Regional Housing Authority's Youth Emergency Shelter at 9290 Hurlock Ave.

The JCHH has prioritized this project as there are currently no emergency shelter facilities for unaccompanied minors in Juneau. COVID-19 has decreased options for many young people; staying with friends or family is often not possible. Homeless youth are forced to access adult shelters, which are unable to accommodate their age group and can expose vulnerable young people to increased risks. In the face of no safe option, youth must make terrible choices that often compromise their safety in order to have a place to stay.

The following projects are also important in order to safeguard those experiencing homelessness as winter approaches and as the pandemic continues to threaten health and wellness. These projects are not in a priority order, but all have the support of our membership.

St. Vincent de Paul Teal St. Shelter Repairs. Emergency maintenance is required at the SVdP Shelter facility. SVdP needs to replace two water heaters that failed in the last month, fix inadequate siding, and make additional ventilation repairs. Without these repairs, 40 housing units may not be available for recently homeless individuals, including at least 8 people who have transitioned directly from the streets and the Warming Shelter this summer.

Family Promise Day Center. The COVID-19 pandemic limited gathering spaces within congregational spaces, and Family Promise has been operating solely out of Chapel By The Lake, relying on this one facility for day activities, office space, and shelter. Family Promise wants to continue to responsibly utilize congregational spaces for shelter, but requires additional space for daytime activities with families and office space. This request will build in additional resources for Juneau families already struggling with housing instability and COVID related trauma.

The Glory Hall (TGH) Health Insurance. Health Insurance for employees has been an ongoing organizational priority and challenge for the Glory Hall. The Glory Hall does not offer employees health insurance. This results in employees leaving for other jobs which do offer health insurance as well as in recruitment difficulties. Providing employees with health insurance during the time of the pandemic is critical. Glory Hall employees interact directly with the patrons who have been exposed and/or are positive for COVID. They work inside the Glory Hall facility, inside the Housing First Facility, outside of the hotel used for quarantine and isolation while delivering Juneau medical respite meals, and while providing other support to individuals experiencing homelessness. It has become clear that offering health insurance is necessary to operate during the pandemic.

The JCHH is proud to be member-led coalition that values cooperation among providers and community members. We are enthusiastic about these projects because they help provide vulnerable families and youth with food and shelter, which we believe to be basic human rights. COVID has made so many things more difficult for our community; we urge you to consider using CARES funding to help ensure safety for those most in need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Marx", written in a cursive style.

Gus Marx, JCHH Co-Chair