



From the OFFICE of the GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 5, 2020

Contact: govpress@la.gov

Gov. Edwards Awards \$10.4M Affordable Housing Grant to New Orleans in Response to COVID-19 Outbreak

BATON ROUGE — Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards announced that the State has committed \$10,382,000 in community development block grant (CDBG) funds to the City of New Orleans to support nine affordable rental housing projects that were in danger of losing their funding as a result of the response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The funding will be administered through the Office of Community Development. It will allow the nine projects that were awarded by the City in January 2020 to continue on their development timeline after the City reprioritized local funding from long-term multifamily developments to combat the effects of the outbreak, which has exacerbated New Orleans' already critical affordable housing shortage. The economic impact will be magnified with the shutdown of restaurants, bars, hotels and other service jobs. Thousands of residents who were already struggling to pay their rent have either lost their jobs or have experienced a decrease in household income.

"I commend Mayor LaToya Cantrell for reprioritizing the city's housing funds to help those at risk of homelessness, which is another critical step in mitigating the disproportionate suffering caused by this pandemic on housing-vulnerable populations," said Gov. Edwards. "By directing more CDBG funds toward these projects we are helping to ensure continuation of the City's progress in addressing its long-term affordable housing challenges."

"City and State collaboration is an essential part of meeting people where they are in times of emergency. I want thank Gov. John Bel Edwards for working with the City to make sure we can continue the long-term work of expanding affordable housing opportunities even while fighting the homelessness challenges presented by the COVID-19 outbreak," said Mayor LaToya Cantrell.

In order to assist these households, the City has shifted funds to the following programs:

Rental Assistance Program

The City is providing rental and utility assistance to low income households that

have been impacted by COVID-19 pandemic. The rental assistance grant is based on the tenant's ability to pay and the amount of funds needed to bring the account current.

Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)

The TBRA program will provide payments to make up the difference between the amount a household can afford to pay for housing and the rent standard. TBRA funds will be used specifically to assist individuals or households who are at risk of losing permanent housing or those who are in transitional housing and are able to move to permanent housing.

Shelter Expansion and Rehabilitation Program

The City issued a Shelter Expansion and Rehabilitation Program offering to increase the number of available shelter beds to address the nearly 400 unsheltered homeless individuals in New Orleans. The City expects to increase shelter capacity by 300 beds while it works to identify more permanent housing solutions for our unsheltered population.
