

80500

DATE October 27, 2020

TO: Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Norma V. Drummond
 Commissioner of Planning

SUBJECT: Resolution authorizing the agreement between the County of Westchester and The Bridge Fund of New York, Inc. to provide a Foreclosure Prevention Program in Westchester County.

The attached resolution authorizes the County of Westchester (“County”) to enter into an agreement with The Bridge Fund of New York, Inc. (“BFNY”) to provide a grant from the COVID-19 Relief Fund Grant (“CRF”) Program authorized by the CARES Act Funding, enacted in 2020. The grant funds will be used to provide assistance to Westchester County residents in jeopardy of losing their home due to foreclosure. The eligible households must have been impacted by COVID and either laid off/furloughed from their jobs or their jobs no longer exist because of COVID-19. The families must also be able to document that they were current with their mortgage in March 2020. Funds will be distributed to BFNY after an evaluation and certification of the eligible households by BFNY and approval by the County. The amount of the grant is \$400,000.00 of which \$40,000.00 will be for administrative costs, pursuant to an approved budget, for the term September 15, 2020 to December 30, 2020.

The BFNY team will provide families and individuals that have fallen into arrears because of the COVID-19 with case management services that include a needs assessment, review of the reason for the mortgage arrears, determine capacity to handle future mortgage payments, validate the amount of arrears and identify other support needs beyond financial assistance. BFNY team will also work with Westchester Housing Court and advocate on behalf of the client and assist them in reaching a reasonable settlement. BFNY will work with banks or financial institutions on a negotiated settlement that will enable the client to maintain their mortgage. It is anticipated that approximately 36 to 40 clients with mortgage arrears will be assisted. The BFNY team that will assist with this program will be from the Mortgage Arrears Assistance program, Case Managers, a temporary banking professional, one full-time counselor and substantial time will be allocated by the Director of Homeownership Services. Additional staff resources will be used as needed.

The Bridge Fund of New York, Inc. will provide direct financial assistance for up to 4 months of delinquent mortgage payments and related housing expenses, such as taxes, insurance and

Homeowners Association fees. These payments will be made directly to lenders and others and not to the property owners.

The goal and objective of this agreement is to prevent foreclosures to families in the County impacted by COVID-19. The program will be monitored by the Westchester County Department of Planning staff, who will review all payment requests to ensure all contractual requirements are met.

The Department of Planning issued a public Request For Proposals (“RFP”) on May 27, 2020, seeking proposals from organizations to provide assistance to Westchester County households adversely impacted due to COVID-19 or related impacts. In accordance to the County of Westchester’s Procurement Policy and Procedures, the RFP was posted on the County’s website. As of June 10, 2020, seven (7) agencies submitted proposals, Elizabeth Office Services, Choice of New Rochelle, Human Development Service of Westchester, Community Housing Innovations, The Bridge Fund of New York, Inc., Keeping Communities Safe and Westchester Residential Opportunities, Inc. The following organizations will not receive funding as their proposal was incomplete or the agency is not a 501(c)(3): Elizabeth Office Services and Keeping Communities Safe. Choice of New Rochelle responded that they would not provide foreclosure prevention services.

The following organizations will receive funding as they submitted comparable proposals, Human Development Services of Westchester, Inc. will receive \$400,000.00; Community Housing Innovations will receive \$600,000.00, Westchester Residential Opportunities, Inc. will receive \$600,000.00 and The Bridge Fund, Inc. will receive \$400,000.00. Separate resolutions will be submitted for authority to enter into agreements with each of these organizations.

I recommend approval of this agreement.

NVD/cp
Attachment

RESOLUTION

UPON A COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF PLANNING, BE IT HEREBY

RESOLVED: That the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with The Bridge Fund of New York, Inc. (“BFNY”) to provide a grant from the COVID-19 Relief Fund Grant Program authorized by the CARES Act Funding, enacted in 2020. The grant funds will be used to provide assistance to households in order to prevent foreclosures in Westchester County. Funds will be distributed to BFNY after an evaluation and certification of the eligible households by BFNY and approval by the County. The amount of the grant is \$400,000.00 of which \$40,000.00 will be for administrative costs, pursuant to an approved budget, for a term September 15, 2020 to December 30, 2020. BFNY will provide funding to households that have been impacted by COVID and either laid off/furloughed from their jobs or their jobs no longer exist because of COVID-19, and be it further

RESOLVED: That the County Executive or his duly authorized designee is authorized to execute any documents and take any actions necessary to effectuate purposes hereof.

Account to be Charged/Credited

		Major Program, Program & Phase	Object/	Trust	
Fund	Dept	Or Unit	Sub Object	Account	Dollars
101	19	0100	4998	N/A	\$400,000.00

Budget Funding Year(s) FY 2020 Start Date September 15, 2020 End Date December 30, 2020
 (must match resolution)

Funding Source Tax Dollars _____

State Aid _____

\$400,000.00 Federal Aid \$400,000.00 – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 (must match resolution)

Other _____