



City of Hartford * County of Van Buren * State of Michigan

TO: Mayor Hall and the Hartford Commission

FROM: Nicol Brown, City Manager

DATE: July 22, 2024

RE: Letter of Support for USDA grant

ITEM BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

The item before the Commission is to allow the city manager to submit a letter of support for Van Buren County's Office of Community Service to apply for a USDA grant.

DISCUSSION:

The city manager received a request from Van Buren County's Office of Community Service (VBCOCS) to write a letter of support. VBCOCS is applying for a grant from the USDA to address critical homeownership challenges that rural homeowners in the county face. They are requesting \$317,103 in USDA funding to improve the homes of low and very low-income families in the county.

The grant will be used to improve aging properties, outdated electrical systems, failing plumbing, insufficient insulation, and deteriorating roofs. Over two years, VBCOCS has improved 18 homes, enhancing safety, structural integrity, and energy efficiency. This project will significantly boost the quality of life for the residents and strengthen the community's housing infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Hartford City Commission is in support of the USDA grant application from the Office of Community Service and approves a letter of support to be drafted and submitted by the city manager.