

March 21, 2019

C.J.Johnson, Regional Administrator
Region V Systems
1645 N Street
Lincoln, NE 68508

Re: Targeted Capacity Expansion: Special Projects (FOA) No. TI-19-007

Mr. Johnson,

The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners strongly supports Region V Systems' application for funding through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for the Targeted Expansion to Support Homeless Individuals project.

The Targeted Expansion project would address two issues that Lancaster County has identified as priorities for the county: behavioral health and homelessness.

The proposed project would provide critical behavioral health and housing supports for individuals who have serious substance use disorders or co-occurring mental and substance use disorders and are chronically homeless or homeless and at imminent risk of reaching chronic status.

We recognize the importance of addressing both behavioral health issues and housing issues to most effectively serve this vulnerable population. Over 300 people in Lancaster County experienced Chronic Homelessness last year. A six-month assessment of the Coordinated Entry homelessness resource system indicated that the majority of chronically homeless individuals referred had co-occurring mental and substance use disorders.

Lancaster County has a long history of partnership with Region V Systems, the lead agency for the project and the state-designated Behavioral Health Authority serving the County, to develop and coordinate publicly funded behavioral health services. The Region will partner with CenterPointe, the largest behavioral health services provider in the County, and the University of Nebraska on the project.

The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners recognizes the need for this important project in addressing these critical issues in our communities. We encourage the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to support the Targeted Expansion to Support Homeless Individuals project.