

City of Lawrence, Kansas
2007 Outside Agency Funding Request Form

This form is not to be used for Alcohol Tax Funding Requests

AGENCY NAME:	Elizabeth Ballard Community Center
PROJECT /ACTIVITY NAME:	Emergency Service Council Rent and Utility Assistance
CONTACT PERSON:	Chip Blaser
ADDRESS:	708 Elm/P.O. Box 7 Lawrence KS. 66044-0007
PHONE NUMBER:	785.842.0729
AMOUNT REQUESTED:	10,000

When does the fiscal year for the program being funded begin? 1.1.2007

Has your organization received funding from the City previously ? Yes.

If so, what was the source and amount of the funding received?

The Ballard Center has received funding from the City of Lawrence operating budget for the past two years for rent and utility assistance for Lawrence residents through the Emergency Service Council.

Description/Justification (Using 300 words or fewer, describe the program for which funding is being requested, the importance of the program and why City funding is needed.)

The Ballard Community Center is requesting funding for the Emergency Service Council to provide rent and utility assistance to low-income Lawrence residents. The Emergency Service Council (ESC) is a consortium of Lawrence Social Service Agencies, including Penn House, ECKAN, Salvation Army, Douglas County Senior Services and Women's Transitional Care Services, that provide rent and utility assistance to Lawrence residents at risk of losing permanent housing or essential utility services. The funding requested herein would be utilized solely to assist low-income Lawrence residents by making direct payments to landlords or utility providers, including the City of Lawrence, to maintain housing and utility services. Without this program, many families in Lawrence would lose permanent housing, thus facing homelessness and loss of employment. Even families that simply face utility disconnection may lose their home, as many leases provide that the tenant must maintain utility services or be evicted. Each client household of the ESC group is eligible for up to \$200 in assistance in a 12 month period. The client household must have documented income that is under 185% of Federal poverty level and have an eviction notice or utility disconnection notice in order to qualify for assistance. The Emergency Service Council attempts to assist all eligible households, but has been able to assist only about 20-30% of potential applicants due to limited funding for the program. All of the funding received through the City of Lawrence will go to direct assistance payments for eligible residents who are otherwise not served, with no funding utilized for any administrative or overhead expenses of the program.

This request should be supported (maximum of three pages) with the following information:

1. Description of funding support received from all other sources such as the United Way, Douglas County, USD 497, state/federal grants and private funding.
2. Total budget for the agency, number of personnel, and how the requested funding would be used (e.g., personnel, equipment, material, etc.).
3. Does the agency anticipate the need to request funding beyond 2007?

Additional information may be provided within the **three (3) page limit**.

Submit this form and any additional supporting material electronically by April 10, 2006 to

Debbie Van Saun, Asst. City Manager, via email to: dvansaun@ci.lawrence.ks.us

Ballard Community Services, which encompasses the Elizabeth B. Ballard Community Center, Inc., Penn House and the Emergency Service Council, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide affordable quality early childhood education and basic essential life assistance to families and individuals in need. The Emergency Service Council (ESC) is a program of Ballard Community Services, but operates through a consortium of Lawrence social service agencies, as set forth in the program description on the funding request form, with a separate program budget. ESC serves only low-income Douglas County residents who receive eviction or utility, disconnection notices. ESC receives funding and support from several sources, including the United Way of Douglas County, Douglas County, a Community Development Block Grant, and Lawrence churches, as well as contributions from private donors. The demand for ESC assistance has continued to increase over the past several years with the tough economic conditions, even as funding sources for this important program such as the Community Development Block Grant are in jeopardy of losing funding. The program has been strongly supported by the United Way of Douglas County, which provided increases in funding to the program for the last several years.

The budget for the Emergency Service Council for 2007 is projected to be approximately \$90,000. Of this total, approximately \$84,000 will be utilized for direct assistance to qualified applicants through payments to landlords and utility providers. Ballard Center personnel spend approximately 15 hours per week working on administration of the ESC program. As is stated in the program description, **one hundred percent (100%)** of the funding through the City of Lawrence would be utilized to provide direct assistance to Lawrence families in the form of payments to utility providers or landlords. A strong percentage of these funds are returned to the City of Lawrence in the form of payments for water service. The other bills for which applicants may receive assistance are for electricity service, natural gas service, or rent.

Every month, Westar Energy, Aquila and the City of Lawrence utility department disconnect vital services at Lawrence homes due to the occupants' failure to pay for service. Many of these residents are eligible for ESC assistance. Unfortunately, at current funding levels for ESC, the consortium has been able to assist only 20-30% of Lawrence residents requesting assistance. The persons served by ESC are typically working at jobs that simply do not pay enough for the resident to have any extra "cushion" after they meet their monetary obligations. If the family faces an unforeseen expense such as a medical bill or auto repair bill, they may not have enough to pay a utility bill or all of their rent. In addition, because of cuts in other services, including those provided by the State of Kansas, these residents are facing more obligations on their own than ever before. Many of these residents are living in rental properties with lease provisions that state that if a utility is disconnected, the resident is in violation of the lease agreement, and will face eviction. Thus, many of those seeking assistance either have an eviction notice that threatens immediate eviction, or face eviction due to a utility disconnection.

In addition, assisting Lawrence residents to remain in habitable, permanent housing means that those residents have fewer needs for other City services. Residents

will have fewer requirements for police department and ambulance calls, fewer health issues, and fewer court appearances. The burden on each of these services increases as evictions occur in our community. ESC provides direct service to prevent evictions from occurring, thus forestalling the need for other City services. Any increase in funding for this program provides a direct, dollar-for-dollar increase in the amount available to low-income Lawrence residents to maintain a stable living situation. Because the limited funding for this program is a continuing problem, we anticipate that the need for funding may continue past 2007. There simply is not enough funding for this vital assistance program to help all eligible applicants who face emergency situations. With the funding requested herein, another 60-75 Lawrence families will be able to maintain permanent, habitable housing during 2007; without the requested funding, these families will face loss of utility service and even loss of housing.