



# Butte Strong Fund Grant Program Guidelines

## Rebuilding for a Stronger Butte County

**2022**

Recover. Rebuild. Revitalize.

The Butte Strong Fund supports the rebuilding and revitalization of communities throughout Butte County impacted by the Camp Fire. Tragically, the Camp Fire has been declared the most devastating and deadliest wildfire in California history. Its impact has been felt by everyone in our region, and it will take many years of collaborative work for us to rebuild and revitalize homes, health, and wellbeing for all of our neighbors.

Our goal is to work collaboratively with the nonprofit, government, philanthropic, and private sectors to accelerate recovery and rebuilding to create a thriving, resilient, and even stronger Butte County than before the Fire. We are a partnership of funders – North Valley Community Foundation, Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, and the Aaron Rodgers NorCal Fire Recovery Fund – dedicated to working together to achieve this goal.

We are particularly interested in projects and initiatives that serve the most vulnerable members of our community – those with the least resources and most needs, who have the most challenging time recovering post-disaster. We also seek to fill gaps – providing shorter-term, catalytic funding that is not available elsewhere and has the potential to leverage longer-term ongoing support. We want to ensure that our investments leverage – but do not duplicate – other funding streams and lead to significant and measurable positive benefit for impacted households and the region as a whole.

We are honored to steward investments on behalf of a broad range of donors and will therefore design and implement the Butte Strong Fund transparently, accountably, and in accordance with the principles of Partnership, Collaboration, Focus on the Most Vulnerable, Leverage, Impact, and Sustainability.

See below for more on our specific guidelines, criteria, and process – and ***please note that we will continue to update the program areas and selection criteria as new gaps, issues and opportunities emerge through the long-term recovery and rebuilding process.***

## PROGRAM AREAS

### OVERVIEW

Housing and Health & Wellness were identified as top issues facing our community prior to the Camp Fire and are now clearly the most critical areas of need for all of our residents who have been directly and indirectly impacted through the fire. An adequate supply of safe, stable, and affordable housing is key to having healthy communities and a thriving economy as well as to meet the needs of those who lost their homes and/or experienced significant housing cost increases due to the Camp Fire. Moreover, the effect of sudden changes in population redistribution has a serious impact on the health and wellness for the community as a whole. Stress levels are high, and trauma is widespread with employers, co-workers, family and friends needing to confront the effects of trauma and work together to overcome them and build resilience. Increasing the health and well-being of all of our community members is clearly a top priority.

Other program areas may be added as significant needs and opportunities emerge. At this time, any work outside of these two priority areas will be considered by invitation only. For support of individuals most directly impacted by the Camp Fire, Butte Strong Fund and North Valley Community Foundation are supporting the work of the Long-Term Recovery Group and organizations serving those identified by the Unmet Needs Committee.

### HOUSING

Without **safe, stable, affordable housing**, victims of the Camp Fire will be unable to move forward in their lives and access other vital services or contribute to the economic and social vibrancy of our communities. The lack of housing also impacts the ability of the region to attract the shorter-term workforce it needs for rebuilding and the longer-term workforce needed for provision of vital community services and diversified economic growth.

Pre-fire, we had a critical housing shortage in our region – in terms of both the number and type of homes available and the affordability of them. And with the Camp Fire destroying the majority of our more affordable housing stock as well as mobile home parks and board and care facilities that supported our senior and disabled populations – housing, particularly affordable housing, is cited as the number one issue in need of addressing throughout our communities.

We will work with the public, nonprofit and private sectors to increase the supply of permanent housing, particularly affordable housing in our region. We seek to leverage our dollars strategically, building the capacity of the whole system to generate more housing, rather than focusing on individual housing developments or units. Our investments will be data-informed, aligning with community-wide housing needs, priorities, and solutions.

While this data is still being collected and solutions identified, we will consider funding in the following areas and add more over time:

1. Housing studies, policy review, land use planning, and other activities to determine the quantity, type, affordability level, and other factors needed for a thriving region.
2. Non-capital related costs of housing for our most vulnerable populations – such as support to secure ongoing operating and services subsidies for mobile home parks, permanent supportive housing, and board and care options.
3. Rapid re-housing and homeless prevention programs that help families stay in housing or obtain new permanent housing quickly such as housing navigators, landlord liaisons, and short-term financial assistance.
4. Encouraging community support for housing – community education and organizing to support affordable housing projects occurring in all cities and areas of our County and region.
5. Exploration and incentivizing of innovative housing solutions such as Accessory Dwelling Units, Home Sharing, and community land trusts.
6. Efforts to reduce construction costs and accelerate development and production such as off-site, panelized and modular construction and construction training programs to increase the availability of qualified, local workers.
7. Support for construction materials or similar for strategic non-profit partners using volunteer labor to rebuild affordable housing lost in the fire.
8. Support for key positions or workshops with jurisdictional or non-profit partners helping those looking to rebuild navigate complex rebuilding considerations such as Title 25, CDBG-DR Owner Occupied Rebuild program, or similar.
9. Housing policy advocacy to increase availability of land and financial resources for rural and affordable housing.
10. Grants for multifamily or single-family land acquisition to provide low income and affordable housing in the burn scar. Funding would be available to non-profit organizations heavily invested in the recovery/rebuilding efforts.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The level of health and wellbeing and access to a range of behavioral health services was lacking prior to the Camp Fire – with Butte County having the unfortunate distinction of having the highest rates of individuals with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) statewide and a shortage of behavioral health services (such as psychiatric care, substance abuse detoxification facilities, and even licensed social workers) to help address them. Post-fire, the level of individual and community trauma is greatly heightened while the availability of behavioral health and physical health services has been severely impacted.

We will partner with government, nonprofits, faith communities, and others to help all recover from the community-wide trauma and support efforts to build community-wide resilience. We

are particularly interested in helping to build a stronger behavioral health system that can provide access to care for all affected community members. We will also invest in deeper services to improve mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being for our most vulnerable populations and those most directly impacted. We believe in supporting evidence-based programs and ensuring a trauma-informed approach across all of our systems of care.

While this program area is still being developed and solutions identified, we will consider funding in the following areas and add more over time:

1. Collaborative efforts to create a trauma-informed system of care in Butte County including planning, capacity building, training, and assistance identifying and securing ongoing revenue streams for implementation.
2. Capacity building for public health entities to work across sectors; to engage community as key decision makers to create conditions for health, safety, and equity; and to leverage policy vehicles to strengthen public health infrastructure, systems, and approaches.
3. Support for efforts to train, retain, and recruit more behavioral health professionals to our region in order to increase access to care.
4. Support for local organizations and professionals to become trained in methods to prevent and address Adverse Childhood Experiences. Support for implementation of pilot programs in this area if longer-term funding sources are in place or highly probable post the pilot timeframe.
5. Support for other scalable, evidenced-based programs to promote healing and greater health and well-being, particularly those that target our most vulnerable populations, and that have future sustainable funding pathways identified.

**ELIGIBILITY**

1. **Tax Status:** Qualified applicant organizations include federal- and state-recognized tribes, unrecognized tribes with a fiscal agent, nonprofit organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, programs fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3), or units of local government (including public schools). Qualified entities include churches that serve congregations of at least 100 people and the proposed projects or programs that are not denomination specific and meet the specific criteria. Other organizations may also propose projects that meet the specific criteria but may be required to partner with a 501(c)(3) entity.
2. **Non-Discrimination:** Organizations must offer programs and services without discrimination based on age, race, national origin, ethnicity, gender, physical ability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or religious belief.

3. **Geography:** Programs and projects must clearly benefit Butte County residents who have been directly and/or indirectly impacted by the Camp Fire.
4. **Use of Funds:** Our funds are deployed strategically where other sources of funding are not available. As much as possible, we leverage our grants by first tapping into federal and state aid programs and insurance. The project must not supplant public funding or fill gaps that the government and/or private insurance have committed to address.
5. **Restrictions:** The Butte Strong Fund will not consider grant requests for fundraising events, annual funds, endowment funds, political lobbying, individuals, or activities that are restricted to members of a faith community. Capital improvements such as new structures, repair of damaged structures, or acquisition of structures will generally not be considered except for possible short-term, low- or no-interest loans.
6. **Frequency:** Eligible entities may not apply for more than one grant for the same program or project within a 12-month period.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Projects and initiatives will be evaluated by the following selection criteria, and priority given to those that most strongly meet the following criteria:

1. **Vulnerable Populations** – Multiple studies have shown that disaster recovery is not equal and that vulnerable populations have greater needs, fewer options, and longer recovery time frames. Projects that target lower-income households particularly those that include seniors or children; individuals with physical, cognitive, and emotional disabilities; and/or populations that lack access to federal or state recovery resources or reside in isolated areas with limited services will be prioritized.
2. **Camp Fire Connection** – Projects that directly benefit those most impacted by the Camp Fire will be prioritized.
3. **Demonstrable Impact** – The project’s approach (design, delivery, and staffing) is tailored to meet the specific needs of the target population(s) and has a reasonable timeline for implementation. Projects that result in significant outputs and outcomes – either through addressing a broad range of the community's needs and/or resulting in an enduring positive impact for individuals and households – will be prioritized.
4. **Collaboration** — Projects that partner with other organizations and stakeholders to maximize impact and minimize duplication are desired. Organizations with strong track records of collaboration will be prioritized.
5. **Organizational Capacity** – Applicants need to demonstrate their capacity to implement the proposed project in terms of leadership, staffing expertise, and financial health.

6. **Leverage & Sustainability** —The project is supported by a diversity of funding sources and/or has the capacity to leverage additional sources. It is financially feasible with a realistic and viable strategy for sustainability through other ongoing sources.

### **GRANT FUNDING AMOUNTS**

In general, grant awards will range from \$50,000 to \$250,000 and range in duration from one to three years. Amounts above this range may be considered by invitation only.

*Grant requests larger than 25% of the applicant organization's annual operating budget will come under additional scrutiny to ascertain the organization's financial strength and its ability to deliver on the project while maintaining existing operations.*

### **ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES**

Proposed grant budgets may include project staff and consultants and other programmatic expenses needed to plan and implement the programs and provide the proposed services. Grant budgets may also include the costs associated with outreach, intake, and evaluation. Administrative costs of up to 10% of the grant amount will be considered.

### **GRANT REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL AWARDED GRANTEES**

1. Grant Agreement

Upon approval of your application, you will receive a formal, legally binding grant agreement, which will require your signature. This will include the final scope of work, timeline for outcomes, grant budget, the reporting schedule and other legal assurances.

2. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Butte Strong Fund requires grantees to submit biannual reports on project progress and financial expenditures. Please note that timely grant reports will assist the Butte Strong Fund in fulfilling its stewardship responsibility to our donors and the community.

3. Grant Payments

An initial installment of the grant will be paid upon execution of the grant agreement. Subsequent grant installments will be paid upon submission of reports according to the reporting schedule in the grant agreement. The Butte Strong Fund may hold issuance of additional grant installments in the event of performance issues.

4. Public Acknowledgment of Grant

Must be coordinated with the Butte Strong Fund and consistent with the guidelines provided in the grant agreement. Contact David Little, Executive Vice President of Communications, at [dlittle@nvcf.org](mailto:dlittle@nvcf.org) with questions.

## **GRANT PROPOSAL APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

### 1. Grant Inquiry

To predetermine eligibility, the representative for the applying organization will create an account in the grant system and click “Apply” on the Butte Strong Fund website to complete the grant inquiry. Inquiries will be evaluated and responded to within 30-60 days, and if the proposal fits Butte Strong Fund priorities and guidelines, you will be invited to submit a more detailed application. **Note:** This is not required for requests to the Capacity Building Grant Program.

### 2. Full Application

Those who are invited to apply will be asked to provide more details to the proposal submitted in the inquiry stage. This will include a detailed program/project budget, a certificate of liability insurance, as well as specific, measurable outcomes the proposal seeks to address.

## **CONTACT**

If you have questions regarding the grant application process or the guidelines, contact our grants team at [grants@nvcf.org](mailto:grants@nvcf.org).