



Massachusetts Gaming Commission  
101 Federal Street, 12th Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

**2017 COMMUNITY MITIGATION FUND**  
*Specific Impact Grant Application*  
**BD-17-1068-1068C-1068L-11234**

*Please complete entire Application*

City of Springfield

1. NAME OF MUNICIPALITY/GOVERNMENT ENTITY/DISTRICT

Office of Administration and Finance

2. DEPARTMENT RECEIVING FUNDS

Timothy J. Plante, Chief Administrative & Finance Officer

3. NAME AND TITLE OF INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE FOR HANDLING OF FUNDS

36 Court Street, Springfield, Massachusetts 01103

4. ADDRESS OF INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE FOR HANDLING OF FUNDS

413-787-6215 tjplante@springfieldcityhall.com

5. PHONE # AND EMAIL ADDRESS OF INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE FOR HANDLING OF FUNDS

Domenic J. Sarno, Mayor of Springfield, Massachusetts

6. NAME AND TITLE OF INDIVIDUAL AUTHORIZED TO COMMIT FUNDS ON BEHALF OF MUNICIPALITY/GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY

36 Court Street, Springfield, Massachusetts

7. ADDRESS OF INDIVIDUAL AUTHORIZED TO COMMIT FUNDS ON BEHALF OF MUNICIPALITY/GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY

413-787-6215 msarno@springfieldcityhall.com

8. PHONE # AND EMAIL ADDRESS OF INDIVIDUAL AUTHORIZED TO COMMIT FUNDS ON BEHALF OF MUNICIPALITY/GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY

Blue Tarp Redevelopment, LLC.

9. NAME OF GAMING LICENSEE

**1. IMPACT DESCRIPTION**

**Please describe in detail the impact that is attributed to the construction of a gaming facility. Please provide support for the determination that the construction of the gaming facility caused or is causing the impact.**

Focus Springfield Community Television (Focus) operates a public access television studio, training facility and business office located at 1200 Main Street, Springfield, Massachusetts. The television studio (the "Studio") is maintained by a non-profit, 501(c)(3) known as Focus Springfield, Inc. The City of Springfield is dependent on Focus Springfield to provide public access to broadcast public meetings. Even though Focus Springfield is a 501(c)(3), the Studio is designated for the general public and is utilized by, and available to, all City residents. The building at this location was purchased in late 2015 by Blue Tarp Redevelopment, LLC ("MGM") and now comprises the northwestern most corner of the MGM footprint. Focus learned in October 2015 that the building in which resides had been sold to MGM for purposes of the casino development project. On November 18, 2016, Focus received notice from counsel for MGM that the Lease would be terminated in accordance with the terms of the Lease such that the space could be utilized by MGM. Indeed, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission intends to locate its office within that very space currently utilized by Focus.

Focus was created by the City to "focus" on the many positive aspects of living in Springfield and to help counter the often negative media reports about the City. The 6500 square foot facility produces and broadcasts government, educational and community generated programming for the citizens of Springfield. It serves as a meeting space for city residents and hosts events such as talent shows, live music, and related art exhibits. Since 2014, Focus has taught eighty seven residents how make videos that tell their stories, about their community, in their words. Furthermore, during 2016, Focus trained thirty interns from nine different colleges and five public schools in video production. The Studio also houses a 2500 square foot performing arts studio for television production, live performances, fashion shows and as a public meeting space. The articles of incorporation for Focus Community Television provide that the Board of Directors shall be comprised of individuals nominated by the Mayor. The Board currently includes a senior member of city government. Furthermore, Focus employs four full time employees, one part time employee, and community volunteers to operate the facility. Funding for Focus is generated by a cable television license between Comcast Communications and the City, wherein the city designated Focus Springfield as the direct recipient of the funding.

Studio construction commenced in 2013 and opened to the public in June



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2014. It sits at the corner of State Street and Main Street, a prominent location featuring several hundred linear feet of 15-foot high plate glass windows. Five months prior to the 2011 enactment of the Expanded Gaming Act, the site was selected by the Mayor as means of stimulating economic development on that block. Focus has since invested over \$700,000.00 in construction of the studio.

Focus is a unique and valuable resource for the City and its residents. The impact brought about by this eviction presents a significant hardship for viewers in the 40,000 cable TV households and businesses of Springfield, who rely on Focus to stay informed about what is happening in their local community. Focus broadcasts and live streams City Council and School Committee meetings, interviews with prominent local and regional public officials, young entrepreneurs, and other civic events. For example, last September, Focus staged a debate between the six candidates for Sheriff of Hampden County. The debate was telecast on Springfield cable stations, and Live Streamed throughout the County. Moreover, for the last three years, the Focus staff has provided live broadcasts of the Jazz Roots Festival in downtown Springfield, which are twelve hour concerts featuring a mix of local and national musicians. These concerts have drawn thousands attendees from surrounding cities and towns, generating sales for local restaurants and shops. On a daily basis, City agencies like the School Department, Health Department, Police Department, Economic Development Department, and others rely on Focus to provide timely, and other critical, information to City residents. Please see attached list of agencies and organizations assisted by Focus Springfield as well as a list of various programming statistics attached hereto as Addendum I. Please also see supporting letter from Executive Director of Focus Springfield attached hereto as Addendum II.

In addition to the video production activity, Focus, and its predecessor agency, Springfield Media and Telecommunications Group (SMTG), provide free, direct services to City agencies. SMTG and Focus built and maintain over eight miles of fiber optic network used to transmit data and voice communications between all municipal buildings. This network supports the Police Department's ShotSpotter gunshot detection system, a video camera network used by Police and Public Works (both of which were purchased by SMTG) and a radio transmission tower providing communications for local and regional law enforcement, fire, public transportation and ambulance services. The Studio houses office space and monitoring station that supports these activities.

As a result of the aforesaid, the City of Springfield has identified another location to relocate the Studio, which

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location shall be in the Springfield Technical Community College Technology Park. The relocation of the Studio will require relocation of the offices, equipment, and all other property of the Studio, and significantly, will require substantial construction and buildout of the new facility. The City of Springfield has not designated any of its funds for the relocation based on the funding to be provided by the Licensee.

**2. PROPOSED MITIGATION**

**Please identify below the manner in which the funds are proposed to be used. Please provide documentation (e.g. - invoices, proposals, estimates, etc.) adequate for the Commission to ensure that the funds will be used for the cost of mitigating the impact from the construction of a proposed gaming establishment. Please describe how the mitigation request will address the specific impact indicated. Please attach additional sheets/supplemental materials if necessary.**

The City and Focus Springfield propose to mitigate the casino impact by building a suitable replacement of the current facility, which is estimated to cost just under \$950,000 to build, furnish and equip. Construction of the current studio cost approximately \$750,000.00. Broadcasting and related equipment which have been purchased for the Studio is valued at approximately \$200,000.00. Cameras, furniture and computers can be moved to a new location. However, lighting mounts, sound attenuation and other studio specific construction will have to be rebuilt on site.

Focus has procured estimates that design, construction, moving costs, legal fees, and acquisition of requisite permits will cost approximately \$900,000.00. The budget for the aforesaid would include funds provided by MGM by virtue of a \$300,000.00 termination fee paid by MGM to Focus Springfield and internal use of Focus Springfield funds. The MGM payment is tantamount to a substantially similar matching of funds in the amount as requested herein. However, the aforesaid will result in a budget shortfall of \$400,000.00. As a result, this application is to request mitigation funds in the amount of \$400,000.00, which funds will be utilized to alleviate and close the budget shortfall for the aforesaid purposes.

As a result of the notice of termination received from MGM, Focus Springfield has been and continues to incur expenses effective immediately in its efforts to relocate, design a new facility, and continue operations while in transition to a new location. Focus Springfield will continue to incur expenses moving forward in this process.



**3. IMPACT CONTROLS/ADMINISTRATION OF IMPACT FUNDS**

Please provide detail regarding the controls that will be used to ensure that funds will only be used to address the specific impact. If non-governmental entities will receive any funds, please describe what reporting will be required and how the applicant will remedy any misuse of funds.

The Office of Administration and Finance shall ensure that funds are only provided in direct reimbursement for actual expenses incurred as evidenced by invoices, work orders, and other relevant documentation.


**4. RELEVANT EXCERPTS FROM HOST OR SURROUNDING COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS**

Please describe and include excerpts from any relevant sections of any Host or Surrounding Community Agreement. Please explain how this impact was either anticipated or not anticipated in that Agreement.

**CERTIFICATION BY MUNICIPALITY/GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY**

On behalf of the aforementioned municipality/governmental entity I hereby certify that the funds that are requested in this application will be used solely for the purposes articulated in this Application.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Responsible Municipal  
Official/Governmental Entity

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPROVAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS GAMING COMMISSION**

On behalf of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, the Commission hereby authorizes the payment from the Community Mitigation Fund in accordance with M.G.L. c. 23K as outlined in this Application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Executive Director**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Ombudsman**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**ADDENDUM I**

Government & Civic Organizations:

1. City of Springfield:
  - Mayor's Office
  - City Council
  - School Committee
  - Springfield Police Department
  - Department of Parks & Recreation
  - Department of Health & Human Services
  - Office of Planning & Economic Development
  - Elections Office
  - City Library
  - Office of Consumer Information
  - Department of Elder Affairs
2. Hampden County District Attorney's Office
3. Springfield Public Schools
4. Office of Congressman Richard E. Neal
5. MassMutual Center
6. MassDevelopment Corp.
7. Westover Air Force Reserve Base

Colleges & Universities:

1. Springfield Technical Community College
2. American International College
3. Springfield College
4. University of Massachusetts
5. Westfield State University
6. Syracuse University
7. New York University

Nonprofit Organizations

1. Springfield Cultural Council
2. Community Foundation of Western Mass
3. Community Music School of Springfield
4. Springfield Central Cultural District
5. Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame
6. Springfield Jazz & Roots Festival
7. Gardening the Community
8. UMass Center at Springfield
9. City Mosaic
10. Make-It Springfield
11. Revitalize Community Development Corp.
12. ReGreen Springfield
13. Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation
14. Springfield Museums
15. Dunbar Community Center
16. Springfield Indie Soul Festival
17. Springfield Boys & Girls Club
18. Arise for Social Justice
19. D.R.E.A.M Studios
20. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
21. Partners for a Healthier Community
22. DevelopSpringfield
23. New North Citizens' Council
24. Valley Venture Mentors
25. Springfield Partners Network
26. Martin Luther King, Jr. Family Services
27. New England Public Radio
28. Tech Foundry



Programming Statistics

- 9,765..... hours of Focus programming viewed on YouTube since 2014
- 6,781..... hours of Focus programming viewed on YouTube in 2016

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- 58,567..... viewers watched Focus programming on YouTube in 2016
- 26,671..... viewers watched a Focus live web stream (independent from YouTube views)
- 3975..... hours of programming aired on Comcast cable TV
- 130..... original programs aired on Comcast cable TV
- 40,000..... number of television subscriptions to Focus channels\*
- 9,592..... online viewers during the Sheriff Debate
- 16:29..... average view duration of live streams
- 100..... hours of local government meetings recorded
- 30..... hours of press conferences recorded with local, state, and national leaders
- 13..... active community producers creating weekly original programming
- 5..... recurring flagship Focus Staff original programs
- 18..... interns that worked with Focus
- 84..... community volunteers that are signed up for our services
- 4.5..... employees managing day-to-day operations

\* Comcast does not provide additional viewership data to Focus Springfield

**ADDENDUM II**

January 30, 2017

Massachusetts Gaming Commission  
101 Federal Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02110

**RE: 2017 Community Mitigation Fund – Focus Springfield Application**

To Whom it May Concern:

As the operations manager of the non-profit organization, Focus Springfield, Inc. (“Focus”), I am writing in support of the City of Springfield’s Community Mitigation Fund application. As stated in the application, Focus is a unique and valuable resource for the City and its residents. Focus was created by the City to “focus” on the many positive aspects of living in Springfield and to help counter the often negative media reports about the City. The facility produces and broadcasts government, educational and community generated programming for the citizens of Springfield. Furthermore, it serves as a meeting space for city residents and hosts events such as talent shows, live music, and related art exhibits. Overall, Focus is dedicated to public service for the residents of Springfield.

As a result of the notice of termination received from MGM, Focus is incurring expenses effective immediately in its efforts to relocate, design a new facility, and continue operations while in transition to a new location. Focus will continue to incur expenses moving forward in this process. The City of Springfield is requesting \$400,000.00 in mitigation funds from the Massachusetts Gaming Commission to alleviate the costs of relocation. The budget for the aforesaid would include funds provided by MGM by virtue of a \$300,000.00 termination fee paid by MGM to Focus and internal use of Focus funds. The termination fee is tantamount to a substantially similar matching of funds in the amount as requested by the City. These funds will be invaluable to Focus as they pursue re-design and construction of a new studio, and incur moving costs, legal fees and other expenses.

Focus plays an instrumental role in the local community and in serving the citizens of Springfield. Thank you for considering the City of Springfield and Focus Springfield as a recipient of the 2017 Community Mitigation Funds.

Very truly yours,

John Abbott