



United Way 211, Proposal for Toledo City Council
Connecting Toledoans to Health & Human Resources

United Way of Greater Toledo's 211 program is an essential component of public infrastructure in Northwest Ohio. In 2022, the program received more than 85,000 connections for help, through call, text, and chat, and ensured nearly 70,000 residents had access to the vital health and human services they need to lead more fulfilling lives. 211 is an unparalleled service, offering empathy-informed, human-centric approaches as individuals and families navigate difficult times in their lives.

This proposal covers existing 211 programs and services, and outlines how City of Toledo funding will ensure 211 has sustained capacity to serve our neighbors in innovative ways. United Way is seeking \$100,000 in annual funding from the City of Toledo to maintain services across the program. Whereas City of Toledo residents compose two-thirds of 211's annual contacts, this request accounts for a modest less than one-seventh of the program cost.

In addition to existing partnership with the City, United Way is committed to offering specialized 211 trainings and resources to departments and employees to better understand and utilize 211's services to address the most critical needs of residents. Through expanded partnership, 211 will bring added services to the City's first responders, providing materials and localized resources that follow up in the wake of disaster and crisis to ensure Toledo's citizens are able to remain in safe, affordable housing, and have access to basic needs to stay on their feet, and find access to new opportunities.

By securing 211's capacity, we will continue to offer current, high-impact services to Toledoans, and assist with human service-based projects occurring within the City of Toledo, whether those be short-term or long-term endeavors.

Sincerely,

Wendy Pestrue, J.D.
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United Way of Greater Toledo
Serving Lucas, Wood,
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ABOUT UNITED WAY OF GREATER TOLEDO

United Way of Greater Toledo (UWGT) brings a worldwide network into neighborhoods throughout Northwest Ohio to unite the caring power of people to improve lives. Proudly serving residents of Lucas, Ottawa, and Wood Counties, since 1918 we have believed that we all benefit from each other's success. As one of the longest-serving charitable organizations in our region, we are trusted, innovative, collaborative and accountable.

UWGT houses a unique community analytics center focused on continuous improvement standards affecting the health, financial stability, and education of a three-county footprint in NW Ohio. This data informs regional investments in health and human services as well as provides context for workforce development. The methodology for the assessment is specifically designed to address the gap between a commitment to racial equity and the day-to-day work of various groups. Moving from good intentions to measurable transformation is the cornerstone of our organization's mission and strategy.

UWGT funds 50 organizations serving 60 programs in education, food insecurity, financial stability, health, and housing. More than 130,000 individuals* are served annually by UWGT-funded programs.

ABOUT 211

United Way's 211 is a free and anonymous information and referral service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to anyone in Lucas, Ottawa or Wood County with a health or human service need.

211 connects residents to vital health and human support services, including disaster relief, as well as eviction prevention, legal services, tax filing, employment opportunities, and access to food, clothing, shelter, and much more.

The program's skilled staff, Community Resource Advisers (CRAs), are the key to the service, trained to "ask the second question" to identify root issues. The 211 database offers translation services and includes access to more than 800 organizations and 2,300 programs.

More than 85,000 individuals and families contacted 211 in 2022, with food, housing and shelter, and utility assistance continually ranking among the top requests. 211 data is made available publicly in real time so that UWGT, funders, legislators, and others have a constant pulse on community needs.

**Units of service reported annually across funded programs may not account for duplication of services.*



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211 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

211 Counts

All of 211's collected data is publicly accessible up to the previous day at UnitedWayToledo.211counts.org.

211-to-You

Launched in late 2019, 211-to-You brings in-person 211 referrals to residents, who will have the opportunity to speak face-to-face with a CRA, and receive specific services for their health and human service needs. Locations are selected based on high-volume foot traffic, such as the Toledo Lucas County Main Branch Public Library. In 2024, UWGT will begin a partnership with Metroparks Toledo and East Toledo Family Center to feature a CRA at Glass City Metroparks' Enrichment Center.

Crisis and Disaster Relief (911/988)

211 acts as a complimentary service to 911 and 988, both of which receive state-level public funding, whereas 211 does not (efforts are underway). For example, following unexpected home disasters families unsure where to turn for meals, clothes, replacement items, and temporary shelter can count on 211 ([Toledo Blade](#)).

Ride United

In 2022, UWGT was the recipient of a \$26,000 grant to locally pilot a unique partnership between 211 and Lyft. Through this program, a limited number of qualifying contacts were able to receive free transportation services through Lyft. The pilot program has reported a number of initial successes, including one user who was able to save on transportation expenses to purchase a car for more long-term sustainable transportation, and another who was able to secure a ride to the hospital while going into labor before the delivery of her healthy baby.

Translation and Accessibility

In addition to translation services being offered to those contacting 211, translated print materials are available on the 211nwo.org website in Arabic, Chinese, English, and Spanish.

Welcome Toledo Lucas County (TLC) Partnership

211 is partnering with Welcome TLC to host immigrant and refugee-specific resources on its database. This is an essential component of the City of Toledo and Lucas County meeting their Certified Welcoming requirements.



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211 PROGRAM IMPACT

Coordinated Access

211 is the entry point into the Lucas County Continuum of Care services for persons at risk or experiencing homelessness. In partnership with Toledo Lucas County Homelessness Board (TLCHB), the Coordinated Access program exists to establish both a short-term and long-term housing plan for clients and to help resolve and divert people who are at risk or experiencing homelessness. Since 2013, Coordinated Access Specialists have worked intimately with local shelters, hotels, and individuals/families experiencing homelessness. When someone calls 2-1-1 and indicates they are homeless or in need of shelter, the Coordinated Access (CA) specialist will work to explore immediate resources and options. The CA specialist will collect necessary information, and work to facilitate intake into an appropriate shelter; the four network shelters that 211 coordinates with are La Posada, Family House, Beach House, and St. Paul's. In the event that no beds are available, CA also manages waiting lists to get into shelter when space opens up and provides additional resources to provide stability until shelter is available. In **2022**, CA served **1,947** unduplicated households, totaling **4,018** persons referred to in-network shelters. Additionally, **1,271** individuals were referred to other shelter providers. This was a 58.9% increase in referrals year over year from 2021.

211/ CA works in tandem with the TLCHB on additional housing prevention measures through a program called Housing Problem Solving. Housing Problem solving adds an additional layer of prevention, diversion and rapid resolution to the CA toolbox. These services can assist our clients on a wide variety of needs and do more out of the box thinking when it comes to solving housing issues. When we can divert people from entering the shelter system, we are able to more effectively prioritize the most vulnerable populations into services like shelter.

Tax Preparation Assistance

Each year, United Way partners with LISC Toledo's Financial Opportunity Centers to schedule over 3,000 Free Tax Prep appointments through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistant or VITA program. Individuals call into 211 or schedule appointments online to meet with volunteer tax preparers to get their filings completed. To qualify for an in-person filing, income must be less than \$57,000 a year.

- The Free Tax Prep program helped more than 2,200 local homes bring in more than \$3 million in returns in 2022.



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211 BY THE NUMBERS

Contact volume (cumulative call, text, and online chat engagements) has steadily increased since 2019 when the 211 service was revitalized to have a more local presence. 211 has become an essential piece of public infrastructure to Northwest Ohio residents and has seen a dramatic uptick in contacts since the pandemic.

Prior to 2020, annual contacts ranged from 62,000 to 68,000 annually. In 2021, that number increased to more than 104,000 as residents sought access to COVID-19 vaccines and other pandemic relief. In 2022, the program received more than 85,000 contacts, with nearly 70,000 contacts directly connected to help. Over half of that call volume were housing, food, and utility assistance contacts as housing costs and inflation soared.

Of the total contact numbers noted above (i.e. individuals reaching out for help), the charts below demonstrate the number of contacts that were handled, meaning those seeking assistance had needs met and results were reported on.

As pandemic emergency needs waned, an anticipated lowering of contact volume is noted in the graphs. However, a significant increase in needs from City of Toledo residents is apparent. In 2021, more than half of NW Ohio's total contact volume came from City of Toledo residents (53%). However, as handled contacts dropped in 2022 by just under 3,000 individuals, City of Toledo resident needs increased by 13% to account for nearly two-thirds of the contact volume.

As inflation, rental, utility, and housing prices, overall cost of living, and the job market, as well as Public Health Emergency Benefits ending, continue to present financial barriers to individuals throughout NW Ohio and the City of Toledo, United Way does not anticipate a downturn in these numbers through 2023 or in future years.

In this regard, 211's service as a direct helpline increases efficiencies of government, nonprofit, and other public services by reducing call volume and streamlining contacts to resources they need and for which they are qualified. Through direct person-to-person interaction, residents find creative, compassionate solutions to complex problems arising from disaster, unexpected unemployment and financial burden, illness, and much more.



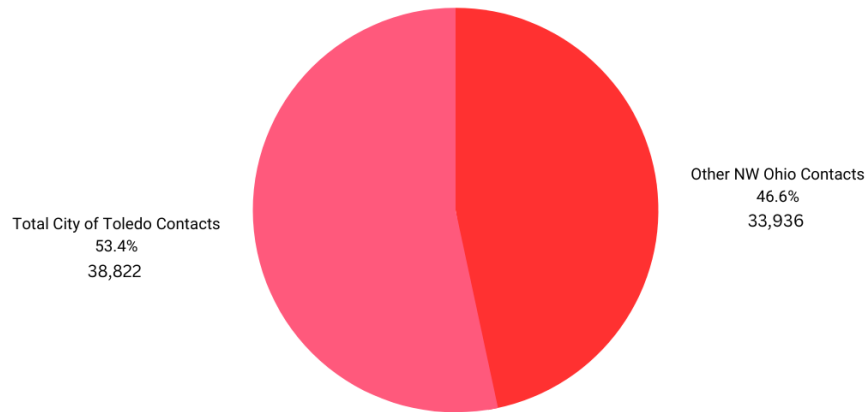
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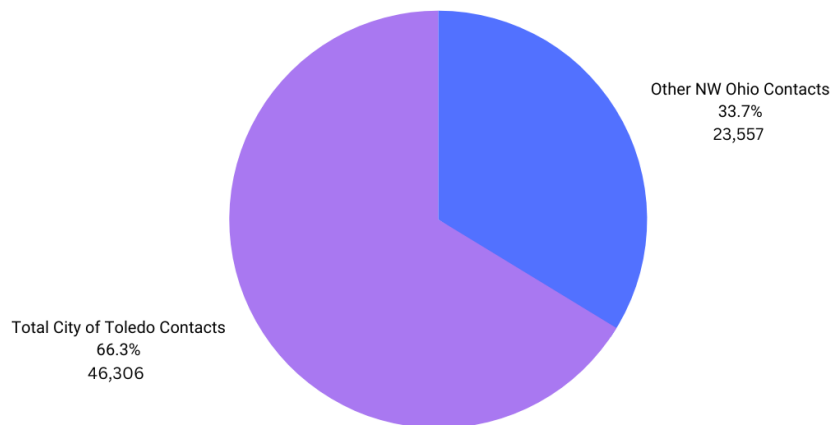
211 Contacts 2021

Total Calls: 72,758

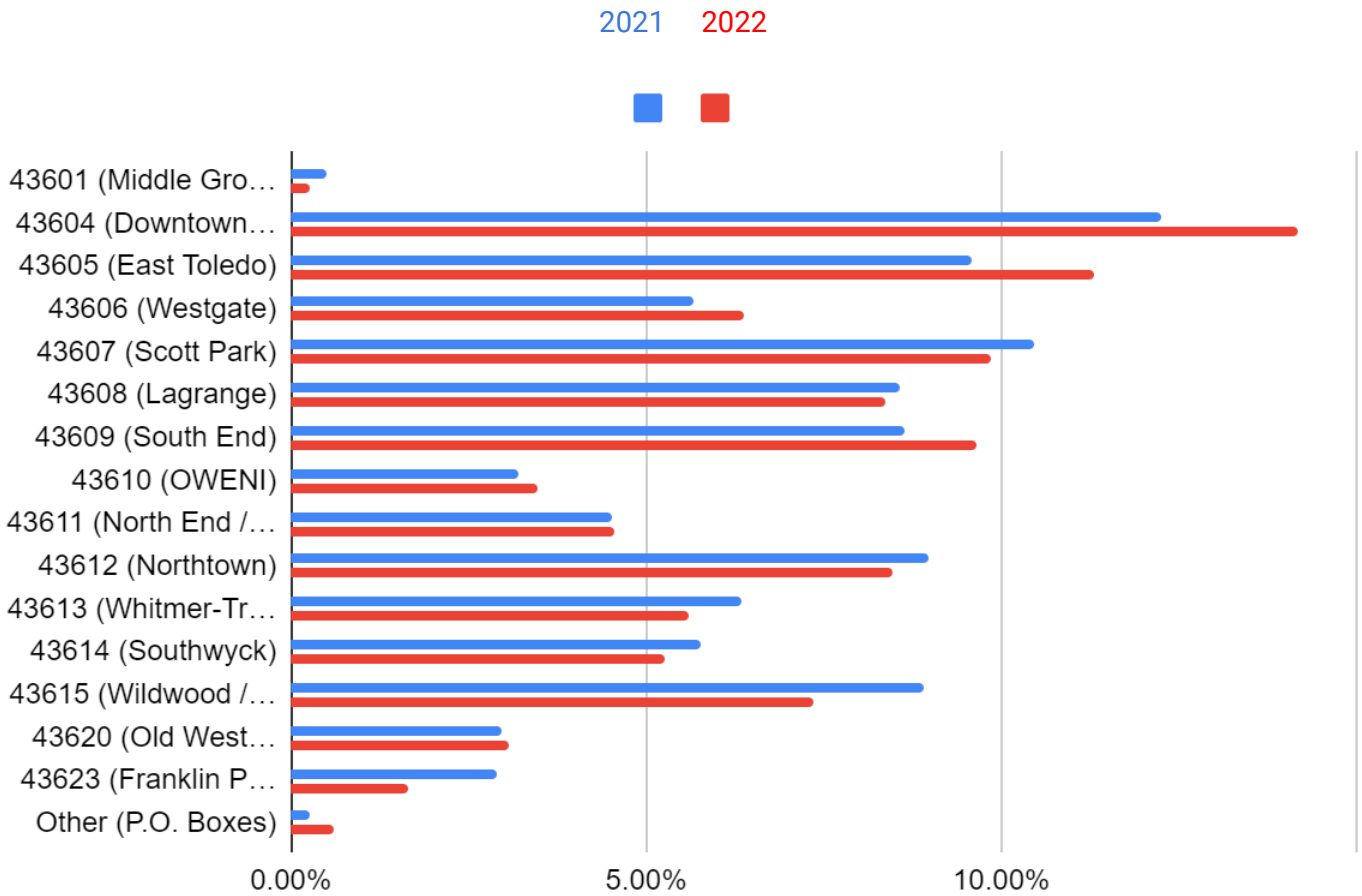


211 Contacts 2022

Total Calls: 69,863



211 CITY OF TOLEDO CONTACTS BY ZIP CODE





2021 CONTACTS	% of Toledo Calls/ Zip Code	2022 CONTACTS	% of Toledo Calls/ Zip Code	
4758	12.26%	6557	14.16%	43604 (Downtown)
3717	9.57%	5229	11.29%	43605 (East Toledo)
2203	5.67%	2947	6.36%	43606 (Westgate)
4056	10.45%	4569	9.87%	43607 (Scott Park)
3333	8.59%	3871	8.36%	43608 (Lagrange)
3348	8.62%	4464	9.64%	43609 (South End)
1241	3.20%	1601	3.46%	43610 (OWENI)
1750	4.51%	2114	4.57%	43611 (North/Point)
3482	8.97%	3914	8.45%	43612 (Northtown)
2459	6.33%	2591	5.60%	43613 (Trilby)
2243	5.78%	2437	5.26%	43614 (Southwyck)
3453	8.89%	3406	7.36%	43615 (Reynolds)
1151	2.96%	1428	3.08%	43620 (OWE)
1120	2.88%	758	1.64%	43623 (Franklin)
292	0.75%	415	0.90%	Other (P.O. Boxes)



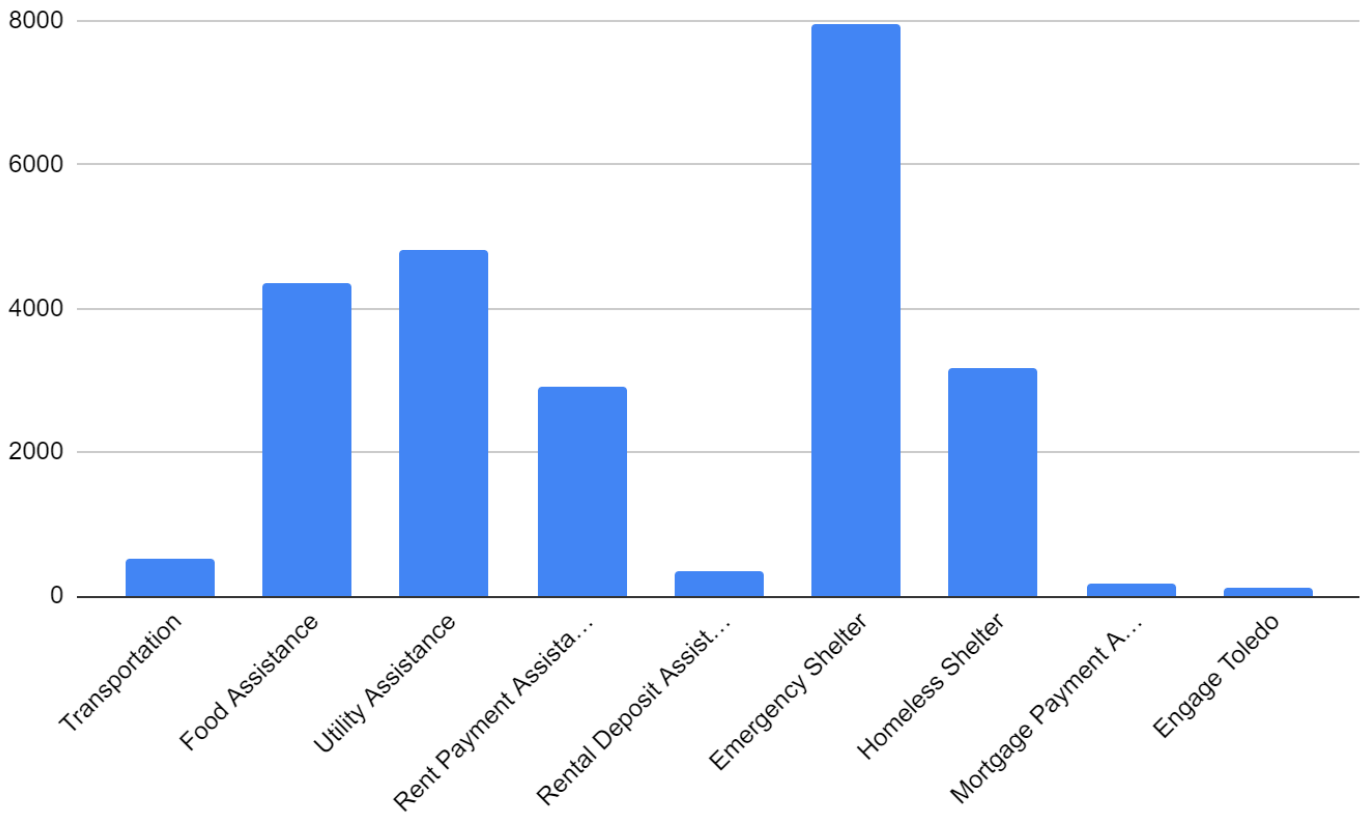
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2022 PRIMARY NEEDS



Transportation: 525 | Food Assistance: 4,359 | Utility Assistance: 4,817 | Rent Payment Assistance: 2,926
Rental Deposit Assistance: 355 | Emergency Shelter: 7,966 | Homeless Shelter: 3,170
Mortgage Payment Assistance: 160 | Engage Toledo: 104

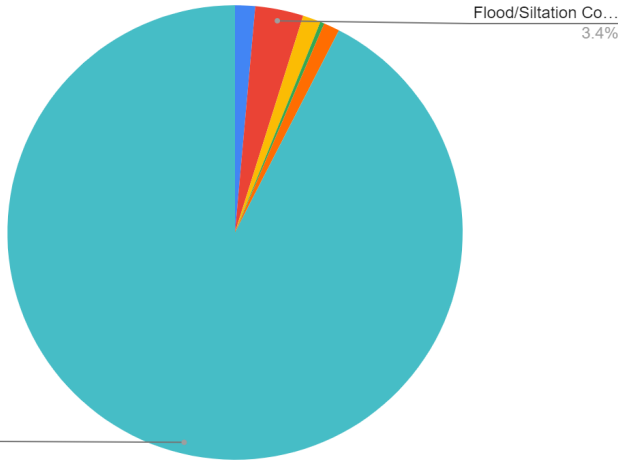


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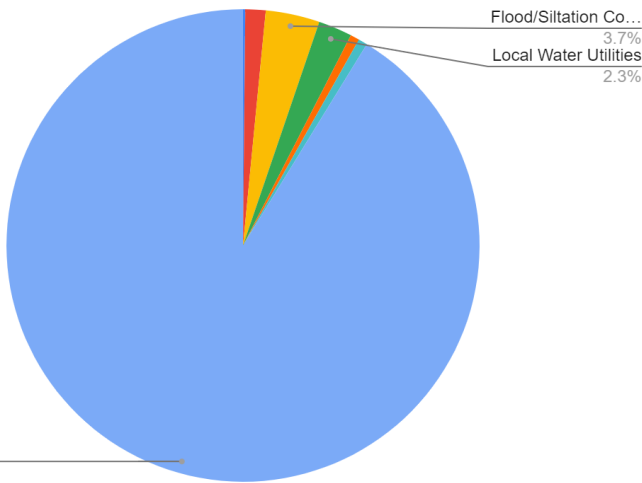
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WATER-RELATED REFERRALS



2021 Contacts: 702

- Water Service Payment Assistance: 649
- Flooding: 24
- Discounted Water: 10
- Local Water Utilities: 9
- Water Quality Assurance: 8
- Tap Water Information: 2



2022 Contacts: 650

- Water Service Payment Assistance: 593
- Flooding: 24
- Local Water Utilities: 15
- Discounted Water Service: 9
- Water Service Connection/Repair: 4
- Water Quality Assurance: 4
- Disaster-related Drinking Water: 1



BUDGET OVERVIEW

211 provides an essential service as a key piece of health and human services public infrastructure in NW Ohio, however, it does not currently benefit from sustainable public investment in the same manner as 911 and 988. Below is the projected 2022-2023 Program Budget. FY 2021-2022 actual expenses were \$637,269.

City: Currently, 211 receives \$85,500 in funding from City of Toledo Department of Neighborhoods specifically for Coordinated Access services for eviction prevention and emergency shelter services in partnership with Toledo Lucas County Homelessness Board.

County: Lucas County Job and Family Services provides \$100,000 annually in funding (in 2022, JFS contributed an additional \$75,000 as 211 was critical in stewarding \$1.3 million dollars to Lucas County households through the Federal Prevention, Retention, and Contingency (PRC) Program).

State: Ohio is the only state in our region without a state funding model for 211. United Way was part of a statewide coalition of Ohio 211 providers seeking to include the program in the State Operating Budget. This budget amendment was unsuccessful during the recent State Budgeting process.

Federal: United Way Worldwide is leading an effort to fund 211 infrastructure through the [HELP Act](#).

United Way of Greater Toledo's total annual budget for operating the 211 program across NW Ohio (Lucas, Ottawa, and Wood counties) is \$764,309. Of this, \$303,980 is funded through UWGT's philanthropic dollars. Offsetting these costs with public funding allows UWGT to invest in direct grants and services to other nonprofit agencies and service providers in our community.

An annual \$100,000 investment in 211 would ensure sustainability of the program beyond shelter services, of which up to two-thirds of information and referral services are dedicated to City of Toledo residents.



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211 Budget	<i>Fiscal 2023</i>	<i>July 2022 - June 2023</i>	
Revenues			
	Source		Budgeted
	HMIS		37,226
	HCRP		42,000
	ESG (CoT; DON)		85,500
	TXX (JFS)		100,000
		Total Grant Revenue	264,726
	In-Kind - UWGT Personnel & Allocated Costs		195,603
		Total Revenue	460,329
Expenses			
	Gryphon - Standard Contract Expense		558,706
	UWGT Personnel & Allocated Costs		195,603
	Marketing & Other		10,000
		Total Expenses	764,309
	Budgeted UWGT Cost (General Funds)		(303,980)



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SUMMARY OF REQUEST

United Way of Greater Toledo thanks Toledo City Council for its consideration of sustained, annual \$100,000 in support of the 211 program.

Currently, United Way of Greater Toledo's total expenditure for 211 is **\$764,309**. This does include staff time from other United Way departments who lend marketing, communication, program development, fiscal oversight and community outreach assistance, which is offset by in-kind revenue credited to the program.

Additional data, reports, and information are available upon request.

Thank you for your consideration and continued service and dedication to making our community a better place to thrive for all of our residents.

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