

ALACHUA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

SOLICITATION OF INTEREST

for the

**Energy Efficiency & Weatherization in Affordable
Housing Grant Program**



Submittal Deadline:

2:00 pm, **Wednesday, May 5, 2022**

**Any response received after the above submittal deadline
will not be considered.**

Background

The Board of County Commissioners of Alachua County intends to establish an Energy Efficiency and Weatherization Grant Program to provide weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades to qualified rental households whose annual income is at 50% AMI or below and who pay their own utility usage. The funding goal is to lower utility bills for low-income residents in rental housing while preserving affordability.

The County seeks a nonprofit (501c3) organization to administer the program. Please read Exhibit A, Program Requirements, carefully and address the questions in this solicitation. Data tracking to prove program success in the form of utility bill savings will be required. In addition, the County requires tracking of utility savings to be converted to carbon offsets.

The funding source for this grant is the American Rescue Plan (ARPA). Any award to a non-profit agency must be through a sub-recipient agreement per Treasury guidelines. All sub-recipients will be responsible for reporting required Treasury metrics.

Sub-recipients are encouraged to coordinate their proposals and services with neighborhood representatives and municipalities. Coordination between these parties will be critical to the effective and efficient deployment of grant funds that meet the program's goals.

Deadline

Submittals must be uploaded to Demandstar.com. by **2:00 pm, Wednesday, May 5th, 2021.**

Inquiries

All questions and inquiries must be sent via email to Leira Cruz Cáliz, Procurement Agent at lcruzcaliz@alachuacounty.us. Responses to questions and queries will be advertised via addenda.



Alachua County Board of County Commissioners

Office of Sustainability, Equity, and Economic Development Strategies

12 SE 1st St, Second Floor

Gainesville, FL 32601

SOLICITATION OF INTEREST

Energy Efficiency and Weatherization of Affordable

Housing Grant Program

Name of Entity:

Street Address of Principal Location:

City:

State:

Zip:

Name of CEO/Authorizing Official:

Phone:

Email:

Eligible Entity Type:

☐ A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

I am the duly authorized official of the entity listed above, and I have read and am familiar with the information in this solicitation of interest. I am aware that an indication of interest made by a prospective service provider involves no obligation or commitment of any kind; and that no funding will be awarded through this solicitation or any contracts arising therefrom. To the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, the information contained in this response is true, correct, and complete.

Authorizing Official Signature

Date

ENERGY EFFICIENCY & WEATHERIZATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING GRANT PROGRAM

Please answer the following questions within your solicitation of interest response.

Organizational Capacity

- A. Describe your agency's demonstrated capacity with similar programs and targeted populations.
- B. Describe your agency's staff qualifications.
- C. Describe the population currently served by your agency.
- D. Describe your planned operational hours (days per week, hours per day, etc.) for the grant program.
- E. Describe your agency's experience coordinating and cooperating with marginalized and low-income neighborhoods and local governments.
- F. Describe any partnership qualifications and experience that will enhance your ability to meet the programmatic goals of the program.

Planning

- A. Describe preparatory activities for implementation, including developing protocols/guidelines and staff training.
- B. Provide a timeline with an anticipated initial operation date for the pilot project and full-scale project through December 31, 2026.
- C. Describe the training and technical assistance needs related to planning, implementing, and evaluating the program, as appropriate.

Technical Proposal

- A. Estimate the total yearly unduplicated number of clients that will be served when fully operational.
- B. Describe your proposed methodology for calculating the carbon offset by the energy savings. Please differentiate between behavior-education-related reductions and building improvement reductions.

Data and Reporting

- A. Describe your agency's capacity to collect and monitor data elements to be included in monthly and annual reports.

Budget

- A. Please explain your agency's experience and capacity to manage the grant and private funds

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Points Awarded
Organizational Capacity	20	
Planning	5	
Technical Proposal	5	
Required Program Components	20	
Safety and Security	10	
Data and Reporting	20	
Budget	20	
Total	100	

Exhibit A

ALACHUA COUNTY ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING GRANT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Energy burden disproportionately impacts renters. Practical, low-cost, long-return investments in a home's utility efficiency are, by the nature of rental agreements challenging to justify for renters and property owners. The property owner does not typically pay for utilities or control usage, while the renter, if lower-income, has little to no incentive or resources to invest in home upgrades. This is especially so for renters in marginalized communities. These populations may only find sub-standard properties that are only relatively affordable. Rental units in these areas may have older building systems, problems with openings in the envelope, and more significant utility expenses than similar-sized properties in more affluent neighborhoods.

The County seeks a non-profit 501c3 entity with qualified experience to administer a grant program for utility efficiency upgrades to renters' homes in marginalized, low-income communities. The goal of this program is to directly benefit these community members by lowering their monthly utility bills and thus increasing the number of energy and water-efficient homes while at the same time retaining their affordability.

Service to Residents

In general, the Grant Program seeks to serve populations that are:

- Renters with incomes at or below 50% AMI.
- Renters must pay their utility bills.
- Renters in demonstrable marginalized and low-income neighborhoods
- Willing landlords.
- Qualified buildings must not need structural or roof repair.

Program Funding Based on Property Owner Commitment

Funding for utility upgrades depends on the landlord's commitment to keeping units affordable. Greater levels of financing of improvements are available for longer-term commitments.

- 3-year commitment funding up to \$5000,
- 5-year commitment funding between \$5,000 to \$10,000,
- 7-year commitment funding between \$10,000 to \$15,000

Landlords that do not commit to the property's affordability will return all invested program funds to the County. The returned funds will include an administrative fee of at least 10% if the grant is paid back early. All participating properties will have a lien placed on them. The lien will be removed at the termination of the funding period.

FUNDING

Alachua County has \$3 million in American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding budgeted for this program. Out of these funds, up to \$15,000 per building unit is available for eligible rental property owners within the unincorporated areas of Alachua County and smaller municipalities. This grant is focused on electricity efficiency and not natural gas.

PILOT PROJECT

Before the full-scale program moves forward, the Non-Profit will coordinate a targeted pilot project to test programmatic methodology, refine outreach efforts, and measure results across various housing types and locations.

The Pilot Scale Project will have funding of up to \$500,000 out of the total of \$3 million in funds. Any unused pilot project funds will be rolled forward into the full-scale project.

Pilot Scale Project Estimated Timeline: (Start) June – (Pilot End) October 2022.

Full-Scale Project Estimated Timeline: (Start) November 2022 – (All Funds Obligated) December 2024 – (Program End) December 2026

Pilot Project Locations

- SWAG Area (unincorporated area),
- East Gainesville (unincorporated area),
- and one or more of the following smaller cities, Archer, Hawthorne, or Waldo.

MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS, AND REPORTING

Data tracking to prove program success in the form of utility bill savings will be required. In addition, the County requires tracking of utility savings to be converted to carbon offsets.

The Non-Profit will recommend to the County refinements to the program, metrics, and project timeline before implementing the full-scale program. The Pilot Program and Full-Scale Program will have baseline data collection points to track renter outcomes. Solicitation of Interest respondents are encouraged to develop additional data points with an outcome focus.

Data Collection Points for ARPA Reporting

- All American Rescue Plan Compliance and Reporting Requirements including but not limited to Negative Economic Impacts for households. See US Treasury Reporting Guidance. <http://www.treasury.gov/SLFRPReporting>
- All American Rescue Plan data reporting requirements for applying funds in low-income and economically disadvantaged communities.

Community-Wide Efficiency and Affordability Outcomes Reporting Metrics

The non-profit shall report all necessary data collection points on the following outcomes:

- Utility Consumption and Cost Reduction Post Intervention in kWh, kGals, Therms, and related metrics.
- Number of homes assisted with total family members served.
- Number and type of improvements made.
- Number of time-sensitive utility housing concerns addressed by the services.
- Increase in the safety and independence of elderly and or disabled residents served by the services.
- Rental cost of home and post improvement verification that the rental cost is still affordable per the program terms.
- Support for local, minority, and women-owned businesses via subcontracted services.
- Estimated carbon offset resulting from 1) education and utility bill management awareness, and 2) home efficiency improvements.

- The non-profit shall submit a simplified carbon reduction calculation methodology as part of their proposal to determine the value of the efficiency and behavior offset. Any methodology shall be based upon a recognized institutional or educational review of the non-profit's program and delivery of services.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY FOR PROPERTY OWNERS AND RENTERS

- Property Owners must agree to keep the units affordable for a specified period after the improvements per Table 1 below.
- Property Owners must agree to repay the cost of the improvements plus a 10% early withdrawal penalty if they change the unit's affordability or sell it.
- Buildings must be located within unincorporated areas of Alachua County, FL, or the smaller municipalities within Alachua County.
- Building tenant must make an annual income at or below 50% AMI¹² and is responsible for paying their utility usage.
- Properties with life-safety issues are not eligible.
- Properties with leaking roofs are not eligible.
- Properties must be available for pre and post-assessments and utility bill tracking.
- Residents must engage in a utility bill review and education opportunity.
- Single-family, duplex, and quadplex units are the only permissible housing types for program participation.

NON-PROFIT ADMINISTRATOR PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Non-Profit will assist the County in any ARPA-related program documentation and analysis.
- Community partnerships are strongly encouraged. Non-profits are encouraged to create partnerships with academic institutions for utility tracking and reporting verification and neighborhood groups for participation and outreach.
- Non-Profit must administer the grant award via an ARPA sub-recipient agreement.
- Non-Profit must regularly report results per ARPA and County requirements.
- Non-Profit must act as the main point of contact for property owners and tenants.
- Non-Profit must communicate all Program Eligibility for Property Owners and Renters terms orally and in writing, documenting their agreement and applicability of both property owners and tenants before starting work.
- Non-Profit must meet ARPA recordkeeping and reporting requirements, including all programmatic equity requirements and Negative Economic Impacts EC2.
- Non-Profit will coordinate with the County's Community Support Services Department in issuing a lien on the grant-funded property.
- Funding can be used toward capital energy efficiency upgrades (see Table 2. for eligible upgrades). An approved contractor must be used.

¹ Per Board adopted comprehensive plan housing policies for very-low and extremely-low income households Policies 1.2.8, 1.3.7, 1.4.6, 1.4.9, 2.2.6 and 2.2.7. <https://growth-management.alachuacounty.us/CompPlan/Housing>

² Per the January 2022 Lighthouse Initiative at Community Springs most pressing need.

- Improvements must be shown to directly reduce the cost of utility bills and result in verifiable energy savings for the tenants.
- Award recipients must maintain the pre-award rent levels, with an increase of no more than the annual increase in the Consumer Price Index, for the following period outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Property Owner Award and Affordability Commitment

Award Amount	Years to Remain Affordable
Up to \$5000	Three years
\$5001 to \$10,000	Five years
\$10,001 to \$15,000	Seven years

- The building owner must provide a copy of the rental agreement or other proof of rental rate annually for the duration of the grant period, as listed in Table 1.
- Participating properties must first undergo an energy efficiency assessment. Once this assessment is complete, the property will be eligible for upgrades. As part of the assessment, the following can be provided at no cost:
 - Residential utility bill review and education
 - Energy-efficient light bulbs
 - Water-saving showerheads and faucet aerators
 - Pipe insulation on AC refrigerant line and hot water heater
 - Toilet tank banks/displacement bags
 - Evaluation of the efficiency of major appliances
 - Cleaning refrigerator coils
 - Checking air filters
 - Conservation behavior education
- Participating properties must undergo a pre and post-energy efficiency inspection upon completion of work.
- If the affordability of the property is changed or if the property is sold at **any time** before the end of the grant duration (see Table 1.), the grant must be paid back in full plus a 10% administrative penalty.

Table 2. ELIGIBLE UPGRADES

ENVELOPE UPGRADES	
Measure	Detail
Wall insulation	Add insulation to building walls. Preference is given if post-implementation R-value exceeds the current building energy code minimum.
Attic/Roof/Ceiling insulation	Add insulation to building attic/roof/ceiling. Preference is given if post-implementation R-value exceeds the current building energy code minimum.
Air sealing	Seal air leaks to reduce air infiltration. Includes caulking, weather stripping, and sealing around doors, windows, and other locations of uncontrolled airflow. Where feasible, a blower

	door test should be used to measure air leakage before and after measure implementation.
Window replacement	Replace existing windows with ENERGY STAR certified windows. Preference is given if the U-value of new windows meets the current building energy code minimum.
APPLIANCE UPGRADES	
Measure	Detail
Clothes washer	Replace existing clothes washer with ENERGY STAR certified clothes washer. Applies only to equipment installed within the dwelling unit; not applicable for equipment in common areas.
Clothes dryer	Replace existing clothes dryer with ENERGY STAR certified clothes dryer. Applies only to equipment installed within the dwelling unit, not applicable for equipment in common areas.
Refrigerator and freezer	Replace existing refrigerators and freezers with ENERGY STAR-certified equipment.
Room air conditioners	Replace existing room air conditioners with ENERGY STAR-certified equipment.
Advanced power strip	Install Tier 1 or Tier 1 advanced power strip on an entertainment center or home office equipment. Advanced power strips automatically shut off equipment based on a master load (Tier 1) or occupant sensor (Tier 2).
Appliance recycling	Recycle inefficient room air conditioners, refrigerators, and freezers to take them out of circulation.
LIGHTING UPGRADES	
Measure	Detail
LED Lighting	Replace existing interior or exterior lamps and/or fixtures with LEDs.
HVAC UPGRADES	
Measure	Detail
Central Air Conditioning	Install an appropriately sized, high-efficiency central air conditioning system that meets or exceeds ENERGY STAR standards.
Air Source Heat Pump	Install high-efficiency air source heat pump system meeting or exceeding ENERGY STAR standards.
Packaged Terminal Air Conditioner (PTAC) or Packaged Terminal Heat Pump (PTHP)	Install high efficiency packaged terminal air conditioner (PTAC) or packaged terminal heat pump (PTHP). The efficiency of new equipment must exceed the current building energy code minimum.

Ground Source Heat Pump	Install ground source heat pump system meeting or exceeding ENERGY STAR standards.
Furnace Blower Motor (ECM)	Retrofit existing furnace distribution system supply fan motor with electronically commutated (EC) motor.
Smart Thermostat	Install programmable, learning, or connected thermostats to configure heating and cooling temperature setpoint setbacks.
Duct Sealing	Seal air leaks and add insulation to heating and cooling distribution system ducts in unconditioned spaces.
DOMESTIC HOT WATER UPGRADES	
Measure	Detail
Low-flow water fixtures – Shower	Install low-flow showerheads. To qualify, the flow rate must be at least 0.5 gallons per minute less than the existing showerhead.
Low-flow water fixtures – Faucet	Install a low-flow faucet aerator on bathroom or kitchen faucets. Flow rate must be less than 1.5 gallons per minute for bathrooms and less than 2.2 gallons per minute for kitchens.
Pipe Insulation	Install insulation on uninsulated domestic hot water distribution piping. Applies only to electric domestic hot water heaters.
Heat Pump Water Heaters	Replace existing domestic hot water heater with heat pump water heater.
OTHER	
Measure	Details
Low-flow water fixture – Toilet	Install WaterSense toilet.