

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Buncombe County seeks \$1 million from the NC Commerce Recovery Housing Program to grow the Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry (ABCCM) Transformation Village campus. The “Pathways to Recovery” project would add a 64 unit (128 bed) transitional housing building, with 32 units (64 beds) reserved specifically for women and mothers in recovery from substance use disorder (SUD). This initiative will help address the urgent need for housing for a vulnerable population while leveraging ABCCM's extensive experience providing comprehensive support services for individuals in recovery.

Goals and Strategies

Expand Recovery Housing Capacity: add 64 new units to the Transformation Village campus, with 32 designed for women and mothers in recovery. This effort will increase the availability of safe and supportive housing for those in recovery and reduce the number of unhoused women and mothers in recovery.

Holistic Support Services: provide an integrated suite of services including SUD treatment, mental health counseling, job training, childcare, and life skills workshops.

Economic and Social Reintegration: assist participants strengthen family bonds and achieve economic independence through targeted support and community integration programs.

Key Activities

Construction of a new 64-unit facility on the existing 24-acre Transformation Village campus.

Expansion of existing recovery programs tailored to the needs of women and mothers in partnership with the Buncombe County Department of Social Services and Vaya Health.

Extension of partnerships with local employers, educational institutions, and service providers to support job training and placement.

Support transition to permanent housing.

Strategic Alignment

This project aligns with regional and national priorities to address the opioid crisis and support vulnerable populations through recovery. It complements existing public health and economic development strategies by focusing on women and mothers. Though this demographic has been critically impacted by SUD, this population is often underserved by traditional recovery programs.

Collaborative Partnerships

ABCCM leverages strong partnerships with local healthcare providers, social services agencies, educational institutions, and the business community. These collaborations are integral to providing a comprehensive recovery ecosystem that addresses the varied needs of participants.

Organizational Capacity

ABCCM brings extensive experience in managing both recovery housing and wrap-around support programs. The organization's infrastructure, expertise in program delivery, and proven track record of successful outcomes position it well to undertake this expansion project. ABCCM currently manages 11 federal and state housing contracts that include recovery contracts. Land of Sky Regional Council and staff members experienced in the CDBG process will serve as grant administrator.

Performance Measures

Recovery Stability: Reduction in relapse rates among participants.

Economic Independence: Increase in the number of participants gaining employment or enrolling in educational programs.

Housing Security: Successful transition of participants to stable, long-term housing upon program completion. Reduction in waitlists supporting housing solutions for the unhoused.

Family Preservation: Support mothers and families to prevent court-ordered separation and promote family reunification.

Project Specifications

The expansion will add 64 units with a mix of single and family bedrooms to accommodate individual women and mothers with children.

Type of Activity: Construction of new housing facilities.

Number of Accessible Units: The project will include 64 fully accessible units to ensure inclusivity, with specifics to be determined based on final design guidelines.

Total Project Cost:

\$5 million based on the architect's estimates.

STATEMENT OF NEEDS

Western North Carolina (WNC) is facing a critical and escalating crisis related to SUD, which is devastating communities and disrupting families while challenging the region's economic stability and growth. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has identified SUD as a major public health issue across the United States, with WNC experiencing higher than average rates of substance use, overdose deaths, and related health complications. Of the 18 NC counties – all of which fall in the Appalachian region – ABCCM serves with its recovery programming, 11 have overdose mortality rates from 2018-21 higher than the state average and 12 have rates higher than the national average.

This crisis demands a comprehensive and strategic response that prioritizes adding new recovery housing beds that include additional support services for residents. The "Pathways to Recovery" project would expand housing options at the 24-acre Transformation Village campus, providing additional programmatic support to help meet the unique needs of women and mothers.

Urgent Need for Recovery Housing

The need for specialized recovery housing in WNC is underscored by the alarming statistics indicating a surge in SUD cases and overdose fatalities. Comparing overdose data from 2024-17 to 2018-21 shows an increase in fatalities in 13 of 18 counties expected to be served by the Transformation Village Expansion Project. The opioid epidemic, coupled with the misuse of other substances, has exacerbated the demand for recovery services, outpacing the current availability of supportive and therapeutic living environments necessary for effective treatment and rehabilitation.

Vulnerable Populations: Women and Mothers

Among the most affected populations within the recovery community are women and mothers, who face unique barriers to accessing effective SUD treatment and recovery services. The intersection of substance use, caregiving responsibilities, and socioeconomic challenges poses distinct challenges for this demographic, making the path to recovery even more complex. The lack of safe, supportive, and affordable housing options further complicates their situation, often leading to cycles of relapse, homelessness, and separation from children, contributing to a perpetuating cycle of poverty and substance dependence for following generations. ABCCM is the only recovery housing provider in Buncombe County that does not charge a rental payment or assess fees within the first 90 days of residence.

The Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry (ABCCM) Response

In response to this dire need, ABCCM proposes to expand its Transformation Village project to include an additional 64 unit transitional housing facility with 32 units dedicated to serving women and mothers in recovery. This expansion aims to provide a holistic approach to recovery, offering not only safe and secure housing but also access to comprehensive support services including substance use treatment, mental health counseling, vocational training, and childcare services. This initiative recognizes the critical role of stable housing in successful recovery outcomes and seeks to address the broader impacts of SUD on individuals, families, and communities in WNC.

Economic and Social Benefits

Investing in recovery housing for women and mothers not only addresses an urgent public health need but also yields significant economic and social benefits. By supporting individuals in their recovery journey, this project contributes to reducing healthcare costs associated with substance misuse, decreasing involvement with the criminal justice system, and enhancing participants' ability to gain employment and contribute positively to their communities. Furthermore, it supports the reunification and strengthening of families, laying the groundwork for long-term societal stability and economic prosperity.

Conclusion

The expansion of ABCCM's Transformation Village to include targeted recovery housing for women and mothers is a strategic and compassionate response to the SUD crisis in Western North Carolina. It addresses a critical gap in the continuum of care and represents a vital step toward healing and rebuilding lives affected by substance use. Through collaborative efforts with state, local, and private partners, this initiative aims to create a model of recovery, career-level job development, supportive social network, and empowerment that can be replicated across the region and beyond, contributing to healthier communities and a stronger, more resilient Western North Carolina.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

"Pathways to Recovery" will begin a significant expansion of ABCCM's Transformation Village, adding a 64 unit transitional housing facility, with 32 units specifically designated for women and mothers recovering from SUD. This facility will offer a nurturing environment where residents can access a range of services tailored to their recovery and personal growth needs, including vocational training, educational opportunities, and wraparound services to support their transition to independence and employment.

Currently, ABCCM provides up to 100 transitional housing beds for unhoused women, veterans, and mothers with children at Transformation Village. ABCCM programming is built upon four developmental phases, called the "Steps to Success:"

1. Stabilization, with all the basic necessities like housing, food, and clothing provided;
2. Life Skills Training, with over 60 volunteer courses to choose from including Bible studies;
3. Education and Professional Training Certifications that lead to living wage jobs;
4. Reintegration with supportive social network and financial stability that leads to permanent housing.

Transformation Village gives hope, healing, health, and a home. Residents get a fresh start and a place to heal – surrounded and supported by the love, trust, education and companionship that is given by our volunteers and congregations.

At Transformation Village, lives are transformed through counseling, training for living wage employment, and help with reintegration into the community. Residents receive health care, healing, hope, and a home. Within a year of arriving homeless at the shelter, 8 out of 10 guests find a good job and resettle into permanent housing. Not only that, 97% are still sober, housed and working two years after leaving.

RHP funding will enable ABCCM to enhance our current offerings by:

- Increasing housing capacity, specifically for women and mothers, a demographic with critical needs.
- Integrating workforce development programs directly into the recovery process.
- Strengthening partnerships with local organizations to provide a comprehensive support network.

Strategic Partnerships

ABCCM collaborates with several key partners to bolster the recovery ecosystem:

Workforce Development Organizations: Mountain Area Workforce Development Board (MAWDB) will facilitate access to job markets and provide employment support services tailored to the needs of individuals in recovery.

Training Providers: Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (A-B Tech) and Goodwill Industries of Northwest North Carolina will offer vocational training and educational programs, equipping residents with the skills needed for in-demand jobs.

Currently on the Transformation Village campus, A-B Tech maintains classrooms to teach industrial sewing, basic nursing courses, IT skills, and hospitality courses. Residents can pursue certificates and degrees at no cost.

Wraparound Service Providers: VAYA Health and the Western North Carolina Community Health Services will provide mental health support, medical care, and other essential services to support holistic recovery and wellbeing.

These partnerships ensure that "Pathways to Recovery" residents receive targeted support that addresses employment, education, and health, forming a solid foundation for their transition to self-sufficiency.

Population Served

ABCCM currently serves a broad demographic impacted by homelessness, poverty, and SUD, with a focus on veterans, families, and individuals facing economic hardships. "Pathways to Recovery" will specifically target women and mothers in recovery from SUD, providing them with the tools, resources, and support necessary to rebuild their lives and reintegrate into the community successfully.

Currently, ABCCM maintains a contract with the Buncombe County Department of Social Services to provide housing for mothers in recovery and their children to help prevent court-ordered family separations. In addition, ABCCM partners with Vaya Health to support transitions from ADATC for women and mothers. Both contractors have expressed the need to double current availability to support this population; this project helps meet that need. The "Pathways to Recovery" project could expand this offering by making more beds and wrap-around services for this population available at Transformation Village. Building on contracts with existing providers will support the expansion of these services.

Support After Program Exit

To support long-term recovery and prevent relapse, ABCCM offers ongoing support after program exit, including:

- Access to alumni networks for peer support.
- Continued availability of counseling and mental health services.
- Job placement assistance and career counseling.
- Regular check-ins for the first year post-exit to assess needs and provide additional support.

Suitability of Location

Transformation Village is strategically located in Asheville, offering accessibility to healthcare services, educational institutions, and employment opportunities. As the population center of Western North Carolina, Asheville and Buncombe County has the strongest recovery ecosystem with the most resources available to the recovery community. In this way, Transformation Village can support not only Buncombe County residents, but also residents from more rural communities in WNC. Transformation Village is located within a ½ mile of an Asheville Rapid Transit bus stop, helping ease the transportation burden, make community resources more available, and provide for an ideal setting for individuals in recovery seeking to reengage with society. In addition, Transformation Village provides a daily shuttle service to healthcare, outpatient treatment services, and vocational training destinations.

Prioritizing Households with Greatest Need

ABCCM prioritizes admission to "Pathways to Recovery" based on the severity of need, focusing on those most at risk, including women and mothers escaping environments conducive to SUD relapse. The program addresses barriers to entry through a holistic assessment process, considering factors such as history of substance use, housing instability, and the presence of children in the household. ABCCM participates in the continuum of care and coordinated assistance. The aim is to create a supportive, inclusive environment that fosters recovery and personal growth.

Conclusion

With the support of the NC Commerce RHP funding, ABCCM's "Pathways to Recovery" project will fill a critical gap in the recovery ecosystem for women and mothers in Western North Carolina. Through strategic partnerships and a comprehensive approach to recovery, education, and workforce development, this project is poised to make a substantial impact on the lives of individuals and families affected by SUD, paving the way for a future defined by health, independence, and economic stability. The project will also significantly reduce the unhoused population.

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Outputs:

1. Housing Capacity Increase:

Output: Creation of 64 transitional housing beds within the "Pathways to Recovery" facility, with 32 beds exclusively reserved for women and mothers in recovery from Substance Use Disorder (SUD).

Measurements: Number of beds available for occupancy within 12 months of project initiation. Number of women housed within 12 months of project initiation. Number of mothers housed within 12 months of project initiation. Number of children housed within 12 months of initiation. Number of overnight stays for women, mothers, and children at the "Pathways to Recovery" site 12 months after project completion.

2. Enrollment and Program Participation:

Output: Enroll individuals in the transitional housing program, with at least 50% being women and mothers in recovery.

Measurement: Number of individuals enrolled and actively participating in the program, tracked through a housing management system. At intake, ABCCM evaluates client health, current living situation, and financial outlook. This process would determine income and other qualifications before enrolling and housing a client.

3. Workforce Development Engagement:

Output: Partnership with Mountain Area Workforce Development Board (MAWDB) and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (A-B Tech) to provide vocational training and educational programs to 100% of the residents.

Measurement: Enrollment and completion rates of vocational training and educational programs, monitored through collaboration with MAWDB and A-B Tech.

4. Provision of Wraparound Services:

Output: Delivery of comprehensive wraparound services, including mental health support, SUD treatment, job placement assistance, and childcare services, to all residents.

Measurement: Number of residents receiving each type of service, tracked via program service logs and partner reports.

Outcomes:

1. Stable Housing Achievement:

Outcome: Residents maintain stable housing within the "Pathways to Recovery" facility for the duration of their program stay.

Measurement: Stability of housing tracked through monthly resident status assessments.

2. Recovery and Mental Health Improvement:

Outcome: Residents demonstrate measurable improvement in recovery progress and mental health, based on standardized assessment tools.

Measurement: Pre- and post-assessment scores using validated tools such as the Addiction Severity Index (ASI) or similar metrics.

3. Economic Independence through Employment or Education:

Outcome: Program graduates either obtain employment or enroll in further education within 6 months of exiting the program.

Measurement: Employment and education status tracked through follow-up surveys and partner feedback 6 and 12 months post-exit.

4. Long-term Recovery Support:

Outcome: Program graduates engage with aftercare services, including alumni networks, counseling, and peer support groups, up to one year post-exit to support long-term recovery.

Measurement: Participation rates in aftercare services tracked through alumni program records and self-reported surveys.

5. Reduced Recidivism into Homelessness or Substance Use:

Outcome: Reduction in recidivism rates for homelessness and substance use among program graduates within the first year post-exit.

Measurement: Incidence of homelessness or substance use relapse reported through follow-up surveys, compared to baseline rates at program entry.

Program Sustainability:

Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry (ABCCM) is uniquely positioned to operate and maintain the Pathways to Recovery expansion of Transformation Village by drawing upon existing contracts supporting the housing needs of women and mothers, its extensive resources, and proven track record in providing specialized services to vulnerable populations. The following outlines ABCCM's capacity and resources:

Financial Stability and Funding:

ABCCM's financial health is supported by a mix of government grants, private donations, support from local churches, and community partnerships. This diverse funding mix will ensure stable funding for the recovery residence.

Budget Management: The organization has a proven track record of effective budget management and financial oversight, critical for maintaining the operational and programmatic costs of the residence.

Organizational Experience and Expertise:

Longstanding Community Presence: With decades of service in Western North Carolina, ABCCM has developed a deep understanding of the community's needs, especially in addressing homelessness, poverty, and substance use disorders (SUDs).

Specialized Programs for Women and Mothers: ABCCM already operates programs catering specifically to women and mothers, providing a solid foundation for the specialized needs of this demographic in recovery.

Staffing and Personnel:

Dedicated Staff: ABCCM employs a team of experienced professionals, including case managers, counselors, and support staff, all of whom have specialized training in SUD treatment, mental health support, and family services.

Training and Development: The organization commits to ongoing staff training and professional development, ensuring that team members stay informed on best practices in recovery support and women's health.

Partnerships and Collaborative Networks:

Strong Community Partnerships: ABCCM collaborates with local healthcare providers, educational institutions, workforce development boards, and other non-profits to provide comprehensive services to residents.

Wraparound Services: Through these partnerships, residents have access to a wide range of wraparound services, including vocational training, childcare, medical care, and mental health services, all critical to supporting their journey to recovery and self-sufficiency.

Programmatic Support:

Evidence-Based Programming: ABCCM's recovery programs are grounded in evidence-based practices, ensuring that women and mothers receive effective, research-backed support tailored to their specific needs.

Holistic Approach: The organization adopts a holistic approach to recovery, addressing not just the substance use disorder but also the underlying social, economic, and health-related challenges that the residents face.

Conclusion:

The ABCCM Pathways to Recovery Housing Initiative aims not only to provide immediate transitional housing but also to foster long-term stability, recovery, and economic independence among its residents. Through strategic partnerships and a holistic approach to support services, this project will significantly contribute to the recovery ecosystem in Western North Carolina, offering a pathway out of substance use disorder and homelessness for some of the most vulnerable populations, including women and mothers. The outputs and outcomes outlined above will serve as key indicators of our progress and success, underpinning our commitment to transforming lives and building stronger communities.

SECTION E – LEVERAGE

ABCCM's project to create a 32-unit transitional housing facility for individuals recovering from substance use disorder (SUD) strategically coordinates federal and non-federal assistance, optimizing resources to provide wraparound services addressing substance abuse, homelessness, risk of homelessness, and employment. This coordination includes tapping into HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) programs, SAMHSA's SUD treatment grants, and local government funding aimed at homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing efforts. Moreover, ABCCM has in place workforce development initiatives funded by the Department of Labor to integrate employment services into the recovery process.

Partnerships

Mountain Area Workforce Development Board (MAWDB): To connect residents with employment opportunities and vocational training tailored to the needs of those in recovery.

VAYA Health: For comprehensive mental health and SUD treatment services, ensuring residents receive the necessary care and support.

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (A-B Tech): To provide educational opportunities and skill development, facilitating career advancement for residents.

Local Childcare Providers: To ensure mothers in recovery have access to reliable childcare, supporting their participation in employment and education programs.

Commitments and Coordination of Services

Peer Support Program: ABCCM operates a Peer Support Program pairing new residents with individuals who have successfully navigated recovery. These relationships support new residents by offering guidance, encouragement, and practical assistance. This program is supported by commitments from local health agencies and trained peer support specialists.

Alignment with ARC Strategic Plan

The project serves the Appalachian region of North Carolina and aligns with the goals of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Strategic Plan, particularly Goal 2: Building Appalachia's Workforce Ecosystem. ABCCM's initiative expands and strengthens community systems by:

Enhancing Educational Opportunities: Through partnerships with A-B Tech and workforce development boards, the project provides residents with access to education and training, essential for obtaining and retaining employment.

Improving Access to Healthcare: Collaboration with VAYA Health and other healthcare providers ensures comprehensive healthcare services, addressing both physical and mental health needs, crucial for maintaining employment.

Supporting Stable Housing: The transitional housing facility directly contributes to stable living conditions, a foundational element for job stability and career advancement.

Facilitating Childcare Services: By coordinating with local childcare providers, the project helps mothers focus on their recovery, education, and employment without the added stress of securing safe childcare.

ABCCM's project not only meets the immediate needs of individuals in recovery but also embodies a forward-thinking approach to economic and social rehabilitation in the Appalachian region. By leveraging partnerships, coordinating a spectrum of services, and aligning with strategic regional goals, this initiative promises to be a pivotal step towards building a resilient, empowered, and self-sustaining community in Western North Carolina.

F – BUDGET NARRATIVE

The expansion of Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry's (ABCCM) Transformation Village aims to address the critical need for additional transitional housing and supportive services for women and mothers recovering from substance use disorders (SUDs). This budget narrative outlines the operating income, supportive services funding, the cost efficiency of the project, and a cash flow pro forma to ensure positive cash flow and sustainability of the expanded facility.

Operating Income and Supportive Services Funding

1. Operating Income:

The daily operating expenses of the expanded Transformation Village will be funded through a combination of sources to ensure diversity and stability of income. These sources include:

Federal and State Grants: A significant portion of operating income will come from federal and state grants dedicated to housing and recovery services. This includes funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS).

Private Donations and Grants: ABCCM will continue to engage with private donors and foundations that have historically supported our mission. We will pursue new grants specifically aimed at supporting housing initiatives and SUD recovery.

Rental Income: A nominal fee for residents able to contribute towards their housing costs will be implemented, structured as a sliding scale to maintain accessibility for all residents.

2. Supportive Services Funding:

Supportive services, including counseling, job training, and childcare, will be funded through:

Service-Specific Grants: Targeted grants from both government and private foundations focused on mental health services, workforce development, and childcare will be sought to fund these critical services directly.

Partnerships: Collaborations with local organizations and service providers will allow for in-kind services and shared funding opportunities, reducing the direct cost to ABCCM.

Cost Efficiency of Project

ABCCM is committed to the cost efficiency of the Transformation Village expansion through:

Leveraging Volunteers: A significant portion of service delivery, including tutoring, job training, and childcare, will be provided by trained volunteers, reducing labor costs.

Energy-Efficient Design: The expansion will incorporate energy-efficient design and appliances to reduce utility costs over the long term.

Bulk Purchasing: Supplies and materials needed for daily operations will be purchased in bulk and through negotiated contracts to ensure cost savings.

Cash Flow Pro Forma

Positive Cash Flow Strategy:

The financial strategy for the Transformation Village expansion emphasizes maintaining a positive cash flow through careful management of sources and uses of funds.

Sources:

Initial Capital Campaign: A targeted capital campaign will raise funds for the construction and initial setup of the expanded facility.

Ongoing Fundraising: Regular fundraising events and donor outreach will ensure a steady flow of private donations.

Grants: Continuous application for and management of federal, state, and private grants will provide both operational and program-specific funding.

Uses:

Construction and Renovation: A one-time use of funds for the physical expansion of the facility.

Operating Expenses: Regular expenses including utilities, staff salaries, maintenance, and supplies will be carefully budgeted and monitored.

Program Services: Direct costs associated with providing supportive services will be funded through designated grants and partnerships to ensure these do not strain the operational budget.

Ensuring Positive Cash Flow:

Monthly Monitoring: Cash flow will be monitored on a monthly basis to identify trends and adjust strategies as needed.

Reserve Fund: A portion of the capital campaign funds will be set aside in a reserve fund to cover unexpected expenses or shortfalls in income.

Adaptive Programming: Services and programs will be evaluated regularly for cost-effectiveness and alignment with funding opportunities, allowing ABCCM to adapt to changing financial landscapes without compromising service quality.

Conclusion

The budget narrative for the expansion of ABCCM's Transformation Village demonstrates a comprehensive strategy to ensure financial sustainability and cost efficiency. Through diversified funding sources, strategic partnerships, and vigilant financial management, ABCCM is committed to successfully expanding its capacity to serve women and mothers in recovery, providing them with the housing and supportive services essential for their journey towards self-sufficiency and wellbeing.

H – ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

ABCCM brings extensive experience in managing both recovery housing and wrap-around support programs. The organization's infrastructure, expertise in program delivery, and proven track record of successful outcomes position it well to undertake this expansion project. ABCCM currently manages 11 federal and state housing contracts that include recovery contracts. Land of Sky Regional Council and staff members experienced in the CDBG process will serve as grant administrator.