

Woodfin Apartments Safety Restoration

RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Asheville Housing Authority

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Application Form

Question Group

Buncombe County requests proposals for projects to help the community recover from and respond to COVID-19 and its negative economic impacts.

Buncombe County has been awarded \$50,733,290 in Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (Recovery Funding), as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. This infusion of federal resources is intended to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery.

Buncombe County is committed to investing these funds in projects that:

- Align to county strategic plan and community priorities
- Support equitable outcomes for most impacted populations
- Leverage and align with other governmental funding sources
- Make best use of this one-time infusion of resources
- Have a lasting impact

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP and any addenda issued hereto.

[Click here for the full terms and conditions of the RFP](#)

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds*

Name of Project.

Woodfin Apartments Safety Restoration

Amount of Funds Requested*

\$695,000.00

Recovery Fund Eligible Category*

Please select one:

Services for disproportionately impacted communities

Brief Project Description*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

Woodfin Apartments has served for the last 15 years as a permanent supportive housing location for people experiencing chronic homelessness. Over the last 5 years, Asheville Housing worked in close partnership with Homeward Bound and the County to provide housing for some of the hardest-to-house members of our community experiencing homelessness. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this resource helped

protect people who would otherwise been extremely vulnerable to infection living in close quarters in a shelter or on the street. During 2020, a piece of stonework fell to the sidewalk off the exterior of the building. No one was injured, but a follow up inspection revealed significant deterioration of the exterior facade presenting serious danger to the residents and staff immediately outside the main entrance to the apartments. We seek funding to cover part of the approximately 1.4 million needed to make the building safe again and preserve it as a resource for the community.

Project Plan*

Explain how the project will be structured and implemented, including timeframe.

This is an urgent project that must be completed in the next 12 months and meets Buncombe County's strategic priorities related to affordable housing, particularly the goal to address the issues of homelessness in the County through partnership with the Asheville-Buncombe Homeless Initiative. It will support equitable outcomes for some of the most vulnerable members of our community, people experiencing chronic homelessness as a result of mental illness, including substance addictions. The project will preserve Woodfin Apartments as an effective community resource for permanent supportive housing for that vulnerable population. Asheville Housing Authority will provide matching funds from reserves saved for long term strategic reinvestment in its properties. The project will make an excellent use of the Local Fiscal Recovery Funds as a one-time infusion of resources, and will have a lasting impact by preserving an important community resource for people experiencing homelessness.

The project will be implemented over the next 12 months. It is critical because our architects and engineers have determined that the exterior precast elements of the building have undergone significant deterioration and have been repaired and patched over time in a variety of ways. The current project is intended to substantially remediate and rehabilitate the exterior of the building to protect and stabilize it, allowing it to remain in solid condition into the foreseeable future. Work will be completed in a way that consistent with historical preservation for this building, which was constructed in 1930 and is a contributing resource of the Downtown Asheville Historic District. Work will include recasting decorative building elements that have been removed for safety reasons and reinstalling them securely to the building, as well as tuck pointing and sealing mortar and window joints around the entire building exterior. Safety protocols will be strictly followed to protect the vulnerable population served in the building, the staff who serve them, and the general public on the sidewalk below.

Statement of Need*

Describe the need that this project will address. Include data to demonstrate the need, and cite the source of the data.

This project will address an urgent need to restore an unstable building facade that could otherwise cause serious injury or death to the vulnerable residents, staff, and general public. The broader community need to be addressed is preservation of a critical resource for people experiencing chronic homelessness. The Asheville-Buncombe Continuum of Care conducted its annual point-in-time count of people experiencing homelessness on January 27, 2021. As of that date Asheville/Buncombe had 527 people experiencing homelessness, including 134 women, 391 men, and one transgender person. From a race and ethnicity perspective, 369 of those individuals were White, 125 were Black, 8 were American Indian, 25 were other or multiple races, and 15 were Latinx.

Of the 527 individuals homeless in January, 154 (29%) were people experiencing chronic homelessness, which HUD defines as being homeless for more than one year and having a disabling condition. The disabling condition is most often related to mental health, including substance addiction. This is the vulnerable population that Woodfin Apartments serves, those who are hardest to house in the broader community and need permanent supportive housing to live a healthier and more stable life.

Link to COVID-19*

Identify a health or economic harm resulting from or exacerbated by the public health emergency, describe the nature and extent of that harm, and explain how the use of this funding would address such harm.

It is widely recognized that people experiencing homelessness were disproportionately impacted by the adverse health, mental health, and economic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis. Many people experiencing homelessness, including residents of Woodfin Apartments have underlying health conditions that put them at greater risk of contracting COVID-19. Those living in congregate conditions at a shelter or on the street were particularly at risk of contracting the disease. COVID-19 and the resulting economic shutdown eliminated income for those who were working in low-wage non-essential jobs. Perhaps more important for the vulnerable residents of Woodfin Apartments, the pandemic and shutdown caused a significant increase in adverse mental health conditions, including increases in substance addiction and death from overdose.

These impacts were mitigated somewhat by permanent supportive housing resources like Woodfin Apartments, but we and our supportive services partner cannot protect this vulnerable population properly if the building exterior is unsafe for them, so this is an urgent project that needs to be completed in the next 12 months.

Population Served*

Define the population to be served by this project, including volume and demographic characteristics of those served.

Woodfin Apartments includes 18 apartments for residents who formerly experienced chronic homelessness and have been determined "hard to house" by Homeward Bound. That determination is generally made based on multiple evictions from other housing locations. Woodfin Apartments provides relatively low barrier entry for this vulnerable population and onsite supportive services to help them manage their behaviors and avoid disturbing their neighbors. With funding from Buncombe County the building also has a security guard on duty 24/7 to manage entry into the building and assist in resolving disputes that arise between residents or visitors. Many residents were formerly considered "familiar faces" at the Buncombe County detention center due to frequent incarceration, but those frequent encounters in most cases declined significantly after they were placed in a permanent supportive housing unit at Woodfin Apartments.

The current demographic breakdown in the building is -

Gender: 14 men, 13 women;

Race: 12 White, 4 African American, 1 Native American;

Age: 13 ranging from 20-59, 4 ages 60+

Results*

Describe the proposed impact of the project. List at least 3 performance measures that will be tracked and reported. If possible, include baselines and goals for each performance measure.

This project will secure the safety of current and future residents and staff at the Woodfin Apartments by restoring the exterior building envelope to a safe condition consistent with engineering requirements. It will also meet historic preservation requirements because Woodfin is a contributing resource to the Downtown Asheville Historic District.

We propose the following performance measures:

1. Restore building safety by replacing and repairing facade elements to architectural and engineering requirements. Baseline: unsafe building envelope structure. Goal: safe building structure demonstrated by final approval of internal and external inspections.
2. Maintain historic character of the building as required by federal law. Baseline: historic building with damaged facade elements removed temporarily for safety reasons. Goal: restoration of historic character of the building in compliance with State Historic Preservation Office guidelines.
3. Continue serving at least 18 formerly chronic homeless persons and, with unit turnover, others experiencing chronic homelessness or with other special needs. Baseline: 17 current formerly homeless residents (1 vacancy). Goal: maintain baseline and serve others with similar needs as current residents move. We will provide annual demographic reports and other data as requested by the County.

Evaluation*

Describe the data collection, analysis, and quality assurance measures you will use to assure ongoing, effective tracking of contract requirements and outcomes.

Because this a construction project, data collection will consist primarily of building inspection and safety reports from during the construction process. Those inspections will be conducted by contracted architects and engineers and by building inspection officials. We will maintain and share those records as requested.

Our supportive services partner maintains demographic and tracks the success of residents, primarily making every effort to ensure they do not return to homelessness. That housing retention rate has been 90% over the last five years, since we converted Woodfin to its current focus with security funding from the County. Going forward, we will be glad to obtain and share those results and other data as requested by the County. Securing the structural integrity and safety of the building is one essential element in ensuring that these vulnerable residents do not become homeless again.

Equity Impact*

How will this effort help build toward a just, equitable, and sustainable COVID-19 recovery? How are the root causes and/or disproportionate impacts of inequities addressed?

This urgent safety project will ensure that 18 permanent supportive housing apartments remain safe and available to serve the current vulnerable population of people who have experienced chronic homelessness and others facing similar challenges in the future. Providing permanent supportive housing to the most vulnerable in our community improves their lives by reducing the number of times they are incarcerated in the county detention center, allowing a more stable environment for them to manage their mental health and/or substance abuse disorders. Fundamentally, the solution to homelessness is a home. Permanent supportive housing addresses the root causes of homelessness by providing a home, combined with comprehensive supportive services, for those with the most disabling mental and physical health conditions in our community.

Project Partners*

Identify any subcontractors you intend to use for the proposed scope of work. For each subcontractor listed, indicate:

- 1.) What products and/or services are to be supplied by that subcontractor and;
- 2.) What percentage of the overall scope of work that subcontractor will perform.

Also, list non-funded key partners critical to project.

This construction project will be carried out by a qualified general contractor who specializes in restoration work. We have issued an RFP and received competitive proposals. We are currently evaluating those proposals so that we can make the best choice as to qualifications between two firms with comparable cost proposals. The work is summarized in the Project Plan section above. 100% of the work will be carried out by the selected contractor.

Capacity*

Describe the background, experience, and capabilities of your organization or department as it relates to capacity for delivering the proposed project and managing federal funds.

Asheville Housing Authority is a public housing agency with two primary sources of funding: tenant rent and federal housing assistance funds. We currently draw down and manage more than \$24 million annually in HUD Section 8 funding which provides housing assistance payments to support low income residents of Asheville and Buncombe County.

We have successfully managed local funding contributions for the \$40 million redevelopment of Maple Crest Apartments at Lee Walker Heights, which is currently in phased lease-up phase and nearing final completion. Those contributions included \$4.2 million from the County, \$4.2 million from the City, and \$4.5 million from Asheville Housing Authority.

Other capital/construction projects we have managed over the last 10 years include:

1. The \$5.5 million federally-funded renovation of the Arthur R. Edington Center into a community-based education and career center.
2. The \$3 million federally-funded replacement of the exterior building envelope at Aston Park Tower.
3. More than \$10 million in other capital improvements to our facilities from a variety of funding sources, including energy- and water-efficiency upgrades, window replacements, interior renovations, roof replacements, fire alarm and sprinkler replacements, and complete building rehabs after a casualty loss.

Budget*

Provide a detailed project budget including all proposed project revenues and expenditures, including explanations and methodology. For all revenue sources, list the funder and denote whether funds are confirmed or pending. For project expenses, denote all capital vs. operating costs, and reflect which specific expenses are proposed to be funded with one-time Buncombe County Recovery Funds.

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.

Asheville Housing Recovery-Funds-Budget.xlsx

Special Considerations*

Provide any other information that might assist the County in its selection.

Woodfin Apartments Photos.pdf

Homeward Bound, our supportive services partner at Woodfin Apartments, is currently seeking to expand community resources in a major way by purchasing and renovating the Days Inn on Tunnel Road. We understand that the security guards and many of the current residents may move to the new location when that project is complete. In our preliminary conversations, Homeward Bound staff have indicated their desire and intention to maintain the relationship with Asheville Housing at Woodfin Apartments, continuing to serve other County residents experiencing chronic homelessness. Should that change in the future, Asheville

Housing will seek other community partners to provide supportive services to local resident experiencing homelessness or other special needs populations.

Two photographs are attached to demonstrate the urgent building envelope conditions we are seeking this funding to address at Woodfin Apartments. The first photo shows an overall view of the building after some of the building exterior was removed for safety reasons. The second shows the conditions prior to that emergency abatement work.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- Asheville Housing Recovery-Funds-Budget.xlsx
- Woodfin Apartments Photos.pdf

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Proposed Project Budget

Organization Name:	Asheville Housing Authority
Project Name:	Woodfin Apartments Safety Restoration
Amount Requested:	\$695,000

Proposed Project Revenue Funder	Amount	Confirmed or Pending?	Notes
Proposed Buncombe COVID Recovery Funds	\$ 695,000.00	pending	
Asheville Housing Authority Strategic Reserves	\$ 699,600.00	confirmed	
List other sources here			
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Total	\$ 1,394,600.00		

Proposed Project Expenses	Proposed Recovery Funds	Other Funds	Total	Capital or Operating Expense?	Notes
Safety and Emergency Abatement		\$ 62,500.00	\$ 62,500.00	capital	
A/E Design, CM and Inspections		\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	capital	
Construction	\$ 695,000.00	\$ 448,100.00	\$ 1,143,100.00	capital	
Contingency (10%)		\$ 114,000.00	\$ 114,000.00	capital	
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Total			\$ 1,394,600.00		



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