

Project Summary

The **Oklahoma Rural Economic Advancement Program dba REAP Oklahoma** is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit, registered in SAM with UEI: 13-086-8443, SAM/CCR Registration Cage Code: 9AFU3 and Expiration Date: 8-28-25. **REAP Oklahoma** is addressing the housing shortage in rural communities by developing a **Comprehensive Housing Development Strategy Plan (CHDSP)**. **REAP Oklahoma CHDSP** will provide a solution to the housing shortage by providing a specific plan of execution from construction of single and multi-family homes to their occupancy and Property Management and Maintenance in the **REAP Oklahoma CommonWall™ Programs**. **REAP Oklahoma CommonWall™ Housing Program** is being developed and will be applied within the CHDSP to provide property management, paths to homeownership, support to resources for renting or purchasing the homes, home purchasing and renting education; Additionally, career path education and support in property management, Real Estate, and office management. In tandem, the **CommonWall™ Home Maintenance Program** is being developed and will be applied within the CHDSP to provide services such as home maintenance for CommonWall™ managed properties and the community at large on a sliding scale; Additionally, provide infrastructure maintenance services to the local community government; and, education for homeowners property maintenance, as well as career path training in residential, commercial, and municipal maintenance. Finally, REAP Oklahoma is developing a CommonWall™ APP that will also be applied within the CHDSP to provide access to the Housing and Maintenance program services, as well as, tenant and homeowner rights, as well as local, regional, and state housing and maintenance programs. REAP Oklahoma CommonWall™ program is a “One-Stop Shop” for all housing needs.

REAP Oklahoma will meet Rural community housing needs by providing solutions and working with the community leadership and stakeholders to plan and build needed housing, address infrastructure, and establish a “One-Stop” shop in the **REAP Oklahoma CommonWall™ Programs** that paths and support to rent, or own homes, and the maintenance needs of all.

Economic Development Result

REAP Oklahoma Comprehensive Housing Development Strategy Plan (CHDSP) aims to drive substantial economic development within rural Oklahoma by addressing critical housing shortages, facilitating affordable homeownership and maintenance services to residents, commercial property owners, and municipalities. Additionally, we will provide educational workshops in home maintenance, career paths in skilled trades and real estate, as well as ongoing

professional update training. Thus, creating a sustainable housing model that will benefit the community for years to come. This project will stimulate the local economy through:

- **Job Creation and Skills Development:** The project will create jobs within the construction sector, fostering local employment opportunities and providing a pathway for workers to develop valuable skills. Oklahoma's existing apprenticeship programs will complement this by preparing workers with necessary skills, benefiting both the project and the regional workforce. Additional jobs will be generated in property management, property maintenance, and various housing assistance programs, strengthening employment diversity in the area.
- **Local Business Growth:** By prioritizing local construction contractors, material suppliers, utility providers, and service vendors, the project will support and expand small business activities in the region. Increased demand for goods and services, including local food retail, is anticipated as more residents gain homeownership, ultimately enriching the local economy and business ecosystem.
- **Sustained Economic Impact and Community Revenue:** Beyond immediate job creation, the project will increase property tax revenue and stimulate broader community revenue by expanding housing stock and encouraging long-term homeownership. The rise in local property values and tax contributions will directly benefit public services and community projects, fostering further growth and resilience.
- **Increased Investment Potential:** This project is positioned to attract outside investment interest due to its structured approach to improving local housing and infrastructure. By meeting a critical housing need and establishing a model for affordable homeownership and maintenance investment education, the **REAP Oklahoma CHDSP** Project sets a precedent that aligns with regional and national development goals, enhancing its appeal to investors and funding bodies.
- **Sustainability:** The project's detailed planning, developed through this Technical Assistance/Planning Grant, will ensure that its benefits are durable. Long-term economic sustainability is embedded in each phase, from construction and job training to local business integration and revenue generation, establishing a solid foundation for continued economic vitality in the area. This captures how the planning phase will yield lasting economic benefits, underlining the project's potential to sustain and enhance the local economy over time.

Consistency with Local and Area Strategic Plans

The **REAP Oklahoma Comprehensive Housing Development Strategy Plan (CHDSP)** Project aligns closely with multiple strategic plans aimed at addressing housing shortages, improving economic growth, and fostering community resilience across Oklahoma. By focusing on technical assistance, planning, and stakeholder engagement, the project is structured to develop affordable housing that meets both immediate and long-term needs. This effort dovetails with key housing and economic development objectives outlined in local, state, and federal plans:

1. **Oklahoma Five-Year State Consolidated Plan (2024-2028):** This comprehensive plan outlines priorities for increasing affordable housing options, addressing homelessness, and revitalizing rural areas. The **CommonWall™** program supports these objectives by targeting rural housing needs and increasing pathways to homeownership, which, in turn, will enhance community stability and economic growth across Oklahoma's rural communities.
2. **2025 Annual Action Plan Update for Oklahoma:** This annual update emphasizes the need for housing initiatives that alleviate long wait times and provide accessible, affordable homeownership opportunities. By establishing pathways for low- and moderate-income families to transition from renting to owning, and education for the property investment of home maintenance the **CommonWall™** program directly addresses these specific goals, creating an equitable housing market that benefits both the community and the economy.
3. **Tulsa Housing Strategy (City of Tulsa, 2023):** This local housing strategy focuses on creating diverse housing options and expanding affordable homeownership programs. Although primarily urban, it reflects a broader statewide priority to address housing gaps. **CommonWall™** mirrors these goals within a rural context, bringing a similar model to underserved areas in Oklahoma and complementing statewide housing strategies.
4. **USDA FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan:** The USDA's strategic goals include promoting rural prosperity, economic sustainability, and housing opportunities, especially in high-poverty and underserved communities. The **CommonWall™** program is aligned with this USDA strategic vision, focusing on local economic development, job creation, and sustainable rural infrastructure.

Together, these strategic plans underscore the importance of addressing Oklahoma's housing crisis by investing in sustainable development and economic resilience. **REAP Oklahoma Comprehensive Housing Development Strategy Plan** objectives are to build affordable housing, create jobs, provide opportunities to purchase a home, and stimulate local businesses directly.

REAP Oklahoma CHDSP support of these multi-level strategic goals reinforces USDA Rural Development's commitment to fostering community growth and resilience.

Demonstrated Need

The **REAP Oklahoma Comprehensive Housing Development Strategy Plan (CHDSP)** addresses a critical need for accessible and affordable housing in rural communities, where residents face prolonged wait times for housing assistance and limited options for homeownership, as well as the maintenance and repair of homes. The growing demand, evidenced by housing waitlists extending over a year and the decline of home safety due to high costs of maintenance, highlights the immediate need for affordable housing solutions that transition community members from renting to homeownership with maintenance education and support. REAP Oklahoma Comprehensive Housing Development Strategy Plan will bring executable solutions urgently needed relief to a significant housing gap, enabling rural residents to achieve homeownership more affordably and sustainably while maintaining the property investment.

Project Evaluation

The success of the REAP Oklahoma CHDSP Project will be assessed based on measurable outcomes tied to specific goals, such as:

- Feasibility Studies completed
- Support and Commitment from Community Organizations, Governments, and Citizens
- CHDSP completed draft that can be applied to any rural community that leads to:
 - o New housing units constructed.
 - o A large percentage of housing units sold to community members.
 - o Community housing upgraded and maintained through the maintenance program
 - o Reduction in the housing assistance waitlist duration for target areas.
 - o Reduction of housing decline via property maintenance investment
 - o Job creation within local trades and community businesses.
 - o Rural community neighborhood improvements and beautification
 - o Community satisfaction and feedback, gathered through surveys and direct engagement.

The evaluation will include periodic progress checks, with a focus on adapting strategies as needed based on interim findings, to ensure that the project remains on track to meet its objectives.

Project Elements

The primary elements of the REAP Oklahoma CHDSP Project include:

1. **Community Engagement and Support** – Building relationships with local stakeholders, Tribal entities, and community leadership.
2. **Feasibility Studies and Site Selection** – Collaborate in identifying viable properties, securing land, and assessing community and infrastructure needs with Real Estate, Marketing, and Technical and Operational feasibility studies.
3. **Housing Development Planning** – Collaborate in designing single- and multi-family housing models and planning phases of construction.
4. **Partnership Building for Assistance, Job Training and Local Contracting** – Connecting with community organizations, and programs, educational facilities, apprenticeship programs and small business contractors.
5. **Planning for Housing Assistance and Ownership Transition Services** – Setting up financial guidance and homebuyer financial and home maintenance education for residents.

These elements ensure the project is comprehensive, covering short and long-term support for residents and their extended community.

Project Impact

To assess project impact, we will establish guidelines to:

- **Assess the success of the CommonWall™ Housing Program**, the following metrics will be used:
 - o Track **occupancy rates** for the newly built homes to measure immediate demand and success in fulfilling housing needs.
 - o Monitor **job and local economic growth metrics**, including construction jobs, increased apprenticeship enrollments, and partnerships with small businesses.
 - o Evaluate the **reduction in rental dependency** and increase in homeownership rates within the target area.

- o Conduct follow-up **impact surveys** with community members to understand social, economic, and quality-of-life improvements as a result of the project.
- **Assess the success of the CommonWall™ Maintenance Program**, the following metrics will be used:
 - o Number of service requests completed annually.
 - o Number of low-income households served with sliding-scale or free maintenance services.
 - o Participation in homeowner self-maintenance training workshops.
 - o Enrollment and job placement rates for participants in career training programs.
 - o Reduction in maintenance-related issues across CommonWall™ properties.

This impact measurement process will ensure a clear understanding of how the CHDSP project strengthens the community both economically and socially, providing valuable insights to refine and replicate the approach elsewhere.

Scope of Work

The **REAP Oklahoma Comprehensive Housing Development Strategic Plan** project scope under this USDA Opportunity Grant for Technical Assistance and Planning focuses on laying the groundwork for a comprehensive, actionable, and scalable housing development strategy by establishing a baseline through feasibility studies. This strategy will serve as the blueprint for addressing rural Oklahoma's critical housing needs, while supporting economic growth and community empowerment, and providing a Housing Plan that will generalize across different rural geographic locations. REAP Oklahoma integrates solutions for two common problems in economically depressed areas: 1) Housing Needs and 2) Housing and Municipal Maintenance. REAP Oklahoma CHDSP integrates CommonWall™ Programs as part of its overall strategy. These programs work together to serve as a one-stop shop for traditional or non-traditional home rental and purchase, home maintenance, repair, and update services, as well as offering support to the broader community in the form of sliding scale maintenance services, home maintenance education, consult and maintenance of community infrastructure, as well as career and professional training. Home maintenance services such as plumbing, fencing, roofing, etc. will be provided on a sliding scale, with free options available for qualifying low-income residents. Services offered to the municipalities will include infrastructure repair and maintenance on a sliding scale and will also include grant writing for infrastructure support. Additionally, the program will provide homeowner self-maintenance training and career training in maintenance trades, fostering workforce development and housing sustainability.

The following tasks outline the key activities to be undertaken during the planning phase:

Project Activities and Timeline

Task 1: Establishing Community and Stakeholder Relationships

- **Objective:** Build trust and secure commitments from local, state, federal, and tribal entities as well as private and nonprofit stakeholders.
- **Activities:**
 - o Engage Municipal leadership to identify housing and infrastructure needs
 - o Host community engagement meetings to identify housing needs and gather input.
 - o Form partnerships with housing authorities, CDFIs, utilities, skilled trade apprenticeships, and education, and various service providers.
 - o Establish Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to define roles and collaborative efforts.

• **Task 2: Conducting Feasibility and Market Studies**

- **Objective:** Assess the viability and demand for affordable housing solutions tailored to rural communities.
- **Activities:**
 - o Conduct market research to identify property availability and community demographics.
 - o Perform feasibility studies on construction costs, zoning requirements, and infrastructure.
 - o Analyze financing gaps and opportunities, including rent-to-own and other alternative purchasing models.
 - o Analyze residential, commercial, and municipal infrastructures for maintenance gaps and opportunities.

Task 3: Creating a Comprehensive Development Strategy

- **Objective:** Develop a detailed plan outlining the construction plans and schedules coordinating with the CommonWall™ programs, and service aspects.
- **Activities:**
 - o Draft site-specific plans for single-family and multi-family housing developments.

- o Design phased construction schedules and resource allocation plans.
- o Develop a roadmap for integrating sustainability practices and innovative housing solutions.

Task 4: Designing the Service Delivery Framework

- **Objective:** Build the operational foundation for CommonWall™ Housing and Maintenance programs plus APP.
- **Activities:**
 - o CommonWall™ Housing Program:
 - ♣ Establish criteria and processes for rent, lease, purchase, and rent-to-own options.
 - ♣ Create a directory of housing assistance programs and utility support services.
 - ♣ Establish relationships with Financing entities.
 - ♣ Design an office structure to provide ongoing tenant and homebuyer assistance.
 - o CommonWall™ Maintenance Program
 - ♣ Establish criteria for CommonWall™ property maintenance for residential, commercial, and municipal services on a sliding to free cost scale
 - ♣ Create a directory of maintenance assistance programs and maintenance vendors
 - ♣ Establish relationships with Maintenance entities.
 - ♣ Design an office structure to provide ongoing tenant, homebuyer, property owner, and municipal infrastructure assistance and services
 - o CommonWall™ APP
 - ♣ Create a tool that incorporates CommonWall™ housing, maintenance, and educational resources

Task 5: Developing Metrics for Success

- **Objective:** Define measurable outcomes to track the program's effectiveness and impact.
- **Activities:**
 - o Set benchmarks for housing availability, affordability, and homeownership rates.

- o Establish tracking mechanisms for maintenance services, job creation, local business engagement, and community economic benefits.
- o Develop reporting tools to communicate progress to stakeholders and funders.

Timeline

The planning phase is expected to span **12 months**, with each task being carried out in sequential or overlapping phases as appropriate. Regular updates will be provided to stakeholders to ensure transparency and alignment.

Project Implementation

Expected Timeframe

The expected timeframe between the award of funds and the project start is approximately 60 to 90 days. This period will be used to finalize agreements, establish project oversight structures, and initiate stakeholder communications to ensure a smooth project launch.

Explanation of Delays (if applicable)

Delays in initiating the project may occur due to the following factors:

1. **Stakeholder Coordination:** Time needed to align schedules and establish agreements with key partners, including local governments, tribal entities, and nonprofit organizations.
2. **Feasibility Studies and Planning:** Ensuring all studies and plans are initiated comprehensively to meet the goals and objectives of the REAP Oklahoma Comprehensive Housing Development Strategy Plan.
3. **Community Engagement:** Allowing adequate time for public meetings and stakeholder input to refine project components and gain local support.
4. **Resource Allocation:** Securing commitments from subcontractors, consultants, and other service providers integral to the planning process.

This preparatory period will set the stage for effective execution of the planning phase, enabling REAP Oklahoma to maximize the benefits of the Technical Assistance grant and maintain adherence to proposed timelines.