

Fox Cities Habitat for Humanity
USDA Home Preservation Grant 2024
Statement of Activities

Fox Cities Habitat for Humanity is applying for the USDA Section 533 Housing Preservation Grant in 2024. If awarded, these funds will assist low-income and very low-income households in rural areas within the Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity's service area. Each household or project can receive up to \$10,000 to repair or rehabilitate homes with critical health or safety issues, enhancing living conditions and bringing units up to acceptable standards. Approximately six households, primarily very low-income, will benefit from this initiative. For comments on this statement, please contact Amy McGowan at amcgowan@foxcitieshabitat.org.

Details of Financial Assistance

1. Type and Conditions for Financial Assistance

Through Fox Cities Habitat Home Repair program, we will provide financial assistance in the form of zero-interest loans for critical repairs, including structural integrity, energy efficiency, and health hazard mitigation. Eligibility requires income verification, proof of ownership, and details about the necessity of repairs. Our project focuses on single-family scattered sites to address critical home repairs and safety concerns. The Home Repair program targets single-family homes requiring essential repairs to ensure safety and habitability. Our team, including trained staff, site leaders, and volunteers, collaborates with homeowners to address simple repairs, as well as significant issues including plumbing, electrical, roofing, windows, and some foundation work. The program contributes to creating thriving communities by improving the health of safety of existing housing stock, beautifying neighborhoods, and increasing property values.

2. Process for Selecting Recipients and Performing Work

Applicants must submit a complete application, including household and project details, along with income and ownership verification. Eligibility includes having a need for home repairs, having a household income of less than 80% of the county median income, and that the home is the primary residence of the owner. Upon eligibility confirmation, a construction supervisor or qualified staff assesses the property to develop a scoped work plan focusing on critical health and safety repairs. Applicants agree to proposed repairs and sign a scope of work. Repairs are conducted by skilled contractors and Habitat staff, with regular inspections to ensure compliance. The program operates on a first-come, first-served basis for eligible homeowners.

3. Identifying Environmental Impacts

Potential environmental impacts will be identified through a standardized process in accordance with § 1944.672. Compliance with Stipulation I.A-G of the PMOA will be ensured by adopting exhibit F-1 within RD Instruction 1944-N. This process includes a lead hazard evaluation for homes built before 1978, ensuring that any lead-based paint hazards are responsibly managed and mitigated.

4. Development Standards

Fox Cities Habitat require that any changes to rehabilitated or repaired housing meet all applicable State and local codes, ordinances, and requirements or, in the absence of a State or local building code, the International Existing Building Code of the International Code Council. Habitat warrants that all completed work will be in decent, safe, sanitary condition and in good repair. Building, plumbing, electrical and HVAC permits, and inspections will be obtained for all applicable projects as required. Energy-efficient appliances, water fixtures, paints with low/no VOC, and eco-friendly flooring are installed as per the ENERGY STAR New Homes Program whenever applicable.

5. Time Schedule

Home repairs will be completed within a 24-month period from the start date, including recipient selection, needs assessment, procurement of materials, completion of repairs, and project close-out.

6. Staffing Requirements

The Home Repair program is staffed by a construction supervisor, two construction staff members, and administrative support personnel. This proposed project would utilize those existing staff resources. Additional contractors are hired based on project needs, with volunteers occasionally assisting under Habitat staff supervision.

7. Estimated Number of Beneficiaries

Approximately six low- and very-low-income homeowners, including minority and non-minority households, will be assisted.

8. Geographical Area

Our service area includes Outagamie, Waupaca, Calumet, and northern Winnebago Counties in Wisconsin. While focused primarily on Outagamie and northern Winnebago, we are expanding our rural initiatives to better serve communities in Waupaca and Calumet counties, aiming for comprehensive community support and stronger neighborhoods.

9. Annual Estimated Budget

The estimated budget of \$129,119 covers personnel costs, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contracts, and other essential expenses. Home Preservation grant funds would be drawn quarterly to ensure effective fiscal management.

10. Indirect Cost Proposal/Rate

A copy of the indirect cost proposal/rate will be provided, detailing the allocation of costs for personnel, supplies, and other administrative expenses.

11. Accounting System

Upon grant approval, unique expense and revenue accounts are created in QuickBooks. The Finance Director and Development Specialist manages project finances, preparing monthly expense and revenue reports. Copies of checks and invoices are electronically filed for documentation, with quarterly reports compiled and reviewed. Grant funds are tracked using Salesforce by the development team.

12. Evaluation Method

Fox Cities Habitat for Humanity uses an outcomes-based evaluation model to assess project effectiveness. Post-project surveys gather homeowner feedback framed around four outcomes: financial stability, healthier/happier homes, safer/more cohesive neighborhoods, and a sense of community. Quarterly data analysis by senior leadership identifies trends, successes, and areas for improvement, with a target of 80% or higher family satisfaction. Ongoing interviews with partner families ensure continued community engagement and advocacy for affordable, equitable housing practices.

13. Other Financial Resources

Additional financial resources will include donations, grants from local foundations, and in-kind contributions from local businesses, estimated to total \$69,119. Fox Cities Habitat for Humanity has also applied for a rural home repair grant through the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago.

14. Use of Program Income

Any program income generated as part of this project will be used to sustain our programs to build or repair more homes in our community.

15. Plan for Disposition of Security Instruments

The plan for disposition of any security instruments held by the organization will be detailed in the event of its loss of legal status.

16. Other Information

Any additional information necessary to explain the proposed HPG (Housing Preservation Grants) program will be provided as needed.

17. Outreach Efforts

Outreach efforts will include targeted marketing to low-income and minority communities to ensure widespread awareness and accessibility to the program. Our outreach efforts will begin by reaching out to everyone on the waiting list to help them determine eligibility and project scope, ensuring their needs align with the funding requirements we have committed to. This plan includes sending mailers, collaborating with local community partners such as municipalities, chambers of commerce, libraries, non-profits, restaurants, and churches to spread the word about our program. We have established strong relationships with municipalities and community partners in three surrounding rural communities. Based on our experience in these areas and the relationships we have cultivated over the years, we are confident in our ability to meet and exceed our commitment of completing six additional rural repair projects within the grant period.

For further details or comments, please contact Amy McGowan at amcgowan@foxcitieshabitat.org