

Urban County Policy Board

October 14, 2024



October 14, 2024, Meeting Agenda

- (info) I. Introductions
- (action) II. Approval of September 9, 2024, minutes
- (info) III. Program Updates
- (info) IV. Environmental Review Process Overview
- (info) V. Homeowner Rehab Program Presentation
- (info) VI. 2025 UCPB Meeting Planning
- (info) IX. Other



Item II. September 9 Meeting Minutes (action)

Urban County Policy Board Meeting Minutes

Recording at: <https://clark.wa.gov/community-services/urban-county-policy-board>
September 9, 2024

URBAN COUNTY POLICY BOARD ATTENDANCE

Clark County	Councilor Glen Yung
City of Battle Ground	Mayor Troy McCoy
City of Camas	Jim Hodges
City of La Center	Absent
City of Ridgefield	Chuck Green
City of Washougal	Joe Walsh
City of Woodland	Absent
Town of Yacolt	Absent

GUESTS

Dale Whitley (Council for the Homeless); Nicole Leon (Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber); Karolyn Harper (Lifeline Connections); Tasha Slater (City of Vancouver); Mike Taylor (unknown)

STAFF

Michael Torres, Rebecca Royce

I. Introductions

II. June 10, 2024, Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved following a motion made by Mayor McCoy and seconded by Chuck Green.

III. Application and Funding Guidelines Updates

Staff provided recommended updates to the UCPB Application and Funding Guidelines. The document had not been updated since 2016. Staff recommended many changes to the document including language changes, updates to put the guidelines in line with current practices and reorganization of the information. Recommended changes lead to robust conversation and four motions:

1. Mayor McCoy motioned to accept staff recommendation to increase the application maximum for multi-family construction projects under the Affordable Housing and Homelessness request for application (RFA) to \$400,000. Seconded by Joe Walsh and unanimously approved.
2. Mayor McCoy motioned to accept staff recommendation to separate the funding available under the Affordable Housing and Homelessness RFA so that the multi-family construction projects are not competing with Tenant-based Rental Assistance for a portion of the funding. Seconded by Joe Walsh and unanimously approved.
3. Mayor McCoy motioned to increase the application maximum for applications submitted under the Public Facilities and Neighborhood Improvements RFA to \$400,000. Seconded by Joe Walsh and unanimously approved.
4. Mayor McCoy motioned to approve the staff recommended changes to the UCPB Application and Funding Guidelines, inclusive of the changes discussed herein. Seconded by Joe Walsh and unanimously approved.

During the conversation board members requested more data and return on investment information comparing multi-family construction and tenant-based rental assistance activities. Staff will research and provide more information at the June 2025 meeting.

IV. RFA Overview

Staff provided the program year 2025 Funding Guidelines for each of the RFA categories: Public Facilities and Neighborhood Improvements, Asset and Economic Development, Affordable Housing and Homelessness. Applications will be released October 1 with awards at the March 2025 UCPB meeting. The Funding Guidelines received an overhaul to make the documents more useful for applicants and the scoring committee. Staff also mentioned changes to the equity questions and additional questions around timeliness and environmental review.

V. CAPER Overview

The Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) is an annual report due to HUD on the accomplishments of the prior program year. The report captures completed activities and spending from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. Overall, the county spent more than was allocated and more than what was expended the previous program year. Reported activities included business assistance and homebuyer programs, construction of a multi-family project, neighborhood improvements in Camas and tenant-based rental assistance programs. The report is posted on the county's website and outreach included a notice in The Columbian, news release to county-wide media outlets, posting to county social media platforms and an email to stakeholders. A public hearing is scheduled with county council on September 17 and public comments will be accepted through 5pm September 23. The final report will be submitted to HUD by September 27.

VI. Program Updates

- Consolidated Plan Consultant Update:
County staff selected Consultant Resources of Mosier, OR, to oversee the Consolidated Plan process. The contract is in process and planning will begin soon.
- HUD Environmental Review Monitoring:
Staff informed the board that HUD has postponed the environmental review monitoring until at least next year due to federal funding concerns.
- Timeliness Update: and Grant Agreement Update
HUD has accepted Clark County's 2024 Annual Action Plan outlining the proposed activities selected during the last RFA process. The county has received the grant agreement for the HOME funds and is in process of executing the agreement. The CDBG grant agreement is on hold until HUD headquarters determines the new process for reporting on timeliness due to changes to regulations accepted earlier this year. County staff continue to work with projects to complete projects and work towards meeting the timeliness requirement.

VII. April – June 2024 Quarterly Report Review

Staff provided an overview of the results of the April – June report. Neighborhood Improvement projects are slowly moving forward due to changes in the environmental review process. The Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber business assistance program will be timely by the end of December and staff is working with Proud Ground to move their projects along. The VHA Weaver Creek project is expected to start construction early next year and staff is waiting to hear if Second Step Housing received the final funding piece needed to move their project forward. Tenant-based rental assistance programs are all moving forward as expected.

VIII. Point-in-Time Count Presentation

Dale Whitley, HMIS administrator with Council for the Homeless (CFTH), presented the results of the 2024 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count that was conducted January 25, 2024. The PIT is mandated by both HUD and the Washington Department of Commerce to identify the number of literally homeless individuals and families on a specific day each year. The data collected helps identify

trends in homelessness. Dale mentioned that overall homelessness increased by 5% over the 2023 county with unsheltered homelessness falling by 0.4% and sheltered homelessness increasing by 13%. More information can be found on Council for the Homeless' website <https://www.councilforthehomeless.org/point-in-time-count/>. Dale was asked if the data was available by city. At this time, PIT data is not available at that level, but CFTH does provide information on overall homelessness disaggregated by zip code in their Annual System Report available on their website.

IX. Other

- Public Comment: none
- Next meeting, October 14, 2024, 9:30am.



Item III. Program Updates (info)

Minor updated to the UCPB Application and Funding Guidelines

New guidance from HUD re: ability to fund projects in neighboring jurisdictions

Still has to be proportional to the number of beneficiaries from each jurisdiction

Other funding does not need to come from that jurisdictions CDBG funds

Updated Funding Guidelines Section 4

4. For the county to award funding to a project located within Vancouver city limits, there must be a benefit to Clark County residents. Projects located within the city limits of Vancouver should apply to Vancouver for funding.
 - **Public facility** projects located in the city and serve both county and city residents can be funded in part by the Clark County CDBG program. Funding must be proportional to the persons served in each jurisdiction. Funding representing city residents may be from any source other than county funding. The County's final project commitment must be adjusted based on the percentage of county residents served and the amount of other funding invested into the project.
 - **Multi-family Housing** projects located within Vancouver city limits and serve both county and city residents must be funded jointly by Vancouver and Clark County. There are no proportionality or joint timing requirements for the award.

City/County Joint Funding Table

		Location	
		In Vancouver	In Clark County
Funding	City CDBG/HOME	Yes, city can fund	City may fund only if funding is proportional to persons served from each jurisdiction.
	County CDBG/HOME	County may fund only if funding is proportional to persons served from each jurisdiction.	Yes, county can fund



Item III. Program Updates (cont)

- CDBG/HOME Important Dates Calendar
- Timeliness and Grant Updates
 - Attending HUD Timeliness Workshop on October 17
 - Working on new Timeliness plan for HUD
 - Not sure we will make timeliness in May 2025 – 4th year

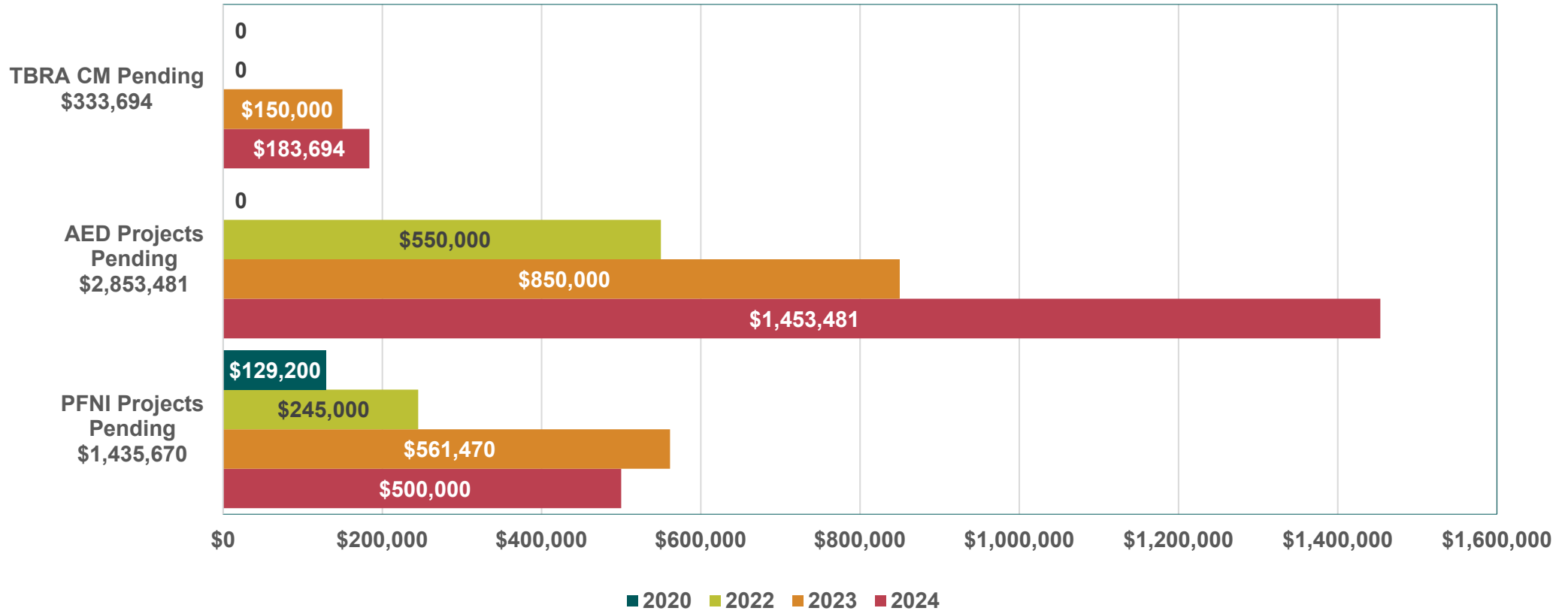
FY2024 CDBG Timeliness Status Table

Grantee timeliness status in FY24 on its test date	Action taken
Timely	No action requested
Untimely for the first time	Sent a warning letter and requested to submit workout plan
Untimely for the second or third consecutive year, but with an adjusted line of credit ratio less than 4.00	Invited to CDBG Timeliness Workshop Required to submit workout plan within 30 days of the Workshop Invited to attend additional in-person timeliness clinics May be invited to join a timeliness technical assistance cohort
Untimely for the second or third consecutive year or more, but with an adjusted line of credit ratio greater than or equal to 4.00	Invited to an informal consultation and subject to loss of grant funds. May be required to participate in risk-based technical assistance and/or may be required to participate in a timeliness technical assistance cohort
Untimely for the fourth consecutive year or more	Invited to an informal consultation and subject to loss of grant funds. May be required to participate in risk-based technical assistance and/or may be required to participate in a timeliness technical assistance cohort



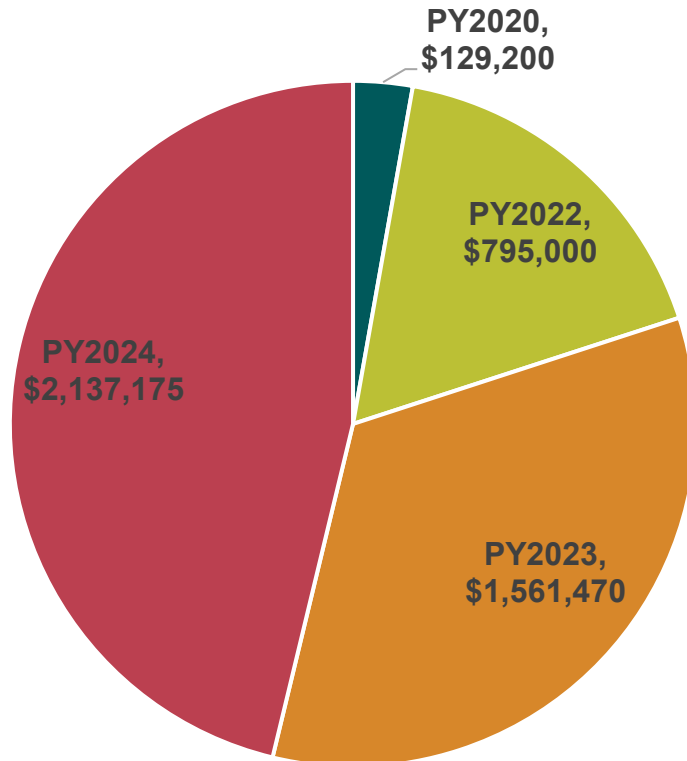
Item III. Program Updates (cont)

CDBG Pending Projects by Type and Year

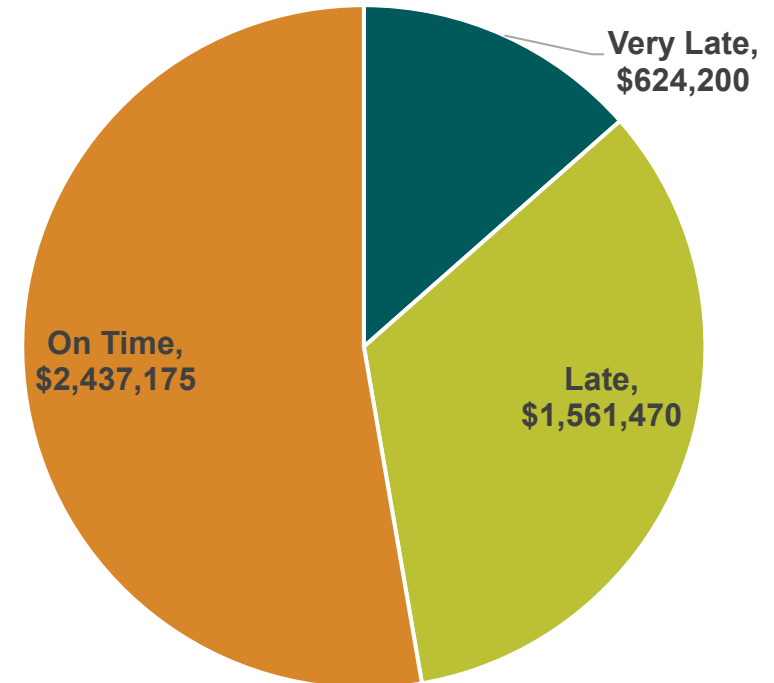


Item III. Program Updates (cont)

CDBG Pending Projects by Program Year



CDBG Pending Projects By Status



Item III. Program Updates (cont)

Status	P	Project	Amount	Notes
Very Late	2020	Battle Ground SE Clark Ave	\$129,000	Attached to Weaver Creek project
Very Late	2022	Ridgefield Gee Creek	\$195,000	Working through ERR
Very Late	2022	Proud Ground Homebuyer	\$300,000	Closing on 2 of 4 houses this month
Late	2022	Clark County Homeowner Rehab	\$250,000	Down to last project
Late	2022/2023	Washougal Hamlik Park	\$179,000	Construction starting
Late	2023	Battle Ground NE 1 st Street	\$200,000	Will need EA. Waiting for report for update.
Late	2023	Ridgefield Hall & Elm	\$232,470	Will need EA. Starting consultation process.
Late	2023	Clark County Homeowner Rehab	\$250,000	Starting 2 projects this month
Late	2023	Proud Ground Homebuyer	\$450,000	Starting after 2022 done



Item IV. Environmental Review Process Overview



Why

- Required compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
 - Umbrella for compliance with other federal laws and authorities (16 total)
- Every dollar of federal funds requires a review by law
- Avoid/mitigate harm to the environment and our clients



When

- Federal nexus is the date the project is determined to be federal
 - Date the application is received
- Must be completed before taking any *choice-limiting actions*
 - Real property acquisition, leasing, disposition, demolition, rehabilitation, repair, construction, site improvements
 - Committing or spending of any funds (HUD or non-HUD)



Key HUD Regulations

- 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508: President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)
 - Regulations for implementing NEPA
- 24 CFR Part 58:
 - Applies to the majority of HUD programs
 - Assumption of NEPA by responsible entities (RE)
 - Incorporates CEQ regulations
 - Defines level of review thresholds
 - Procedures for release of funds



Major Relevant Laws and Authorities

- 24 CFR 58.5 and 58.6

- Historic Preservation
- Flood Insurance
- Floodplain Management
- Coastal Barrier Resources Act
- Coastal Zone Management Act
- Sole Source Aquifers
- Endangered Species Act
- Wild and Scenic Rivers
- Clean Air Act
- Farmland Protection Policy Act
- Environmental Justice
- Wetlands Protection

- 24 CFR Part 51 and Part 55

- Noise Abatement and Control
- Explosive and Flammable Operations
- Toxic Substances and Radioactive Materials
- Airport Clear Zones and Accident Potential Zones



Project Aggregation and Description

- Aggregation

- All known and reasonably foreseeable activities need to be included
- Include all activities that are related: geographically, functionally, logical phases of a project

- Description

- Type of project
- Project description in detail
- Timeframe
- Size/scale of project
- Purpose and need
- Location
- Existing conditions
- Beneficiaries
- Funding sources
- Project partners



Project Aggregation

- Can include up to 5 years of activities
- Has to have a complete and accurate project description
- If project changes *at all*, must do an addendum to the initial environmental review
- Cannot guarantee agency will get funding each year



Levels of Review

- Exempt
 - Planning, administration, technical assistance and training, public services
 - Less than an hour to complete
- Categorical Exclusions Not Subject to 58.5 (CENST)
 - TBRA, economic development
 - Up to an hour to complete
- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
 - Projects with significant environmental impact
 - 1-2 *years* to complete



Levels of Review (cont)

- Categorical Exclusions Subject to 58.5 (CEST)
 - Acquisition, repair, improvement, reconstruction, rehabilitation of public facilities when facilities are already in place and will be retained in the same use without change in size or capacity more than 20%
 - Rehab or improvement of buildings with little to no increased density and land use not changing
 - Up to 75 days to complete depending on consultations required
 - Review Results
 - May convert to exempt if meets all requirements and no consultations needed
 - If doesn't convert to exempt, and no significant environmental impact, NOI/RROF process required
 - If significant environmental impact, elevates to an EA



Levels of Review (cont)

- Environmental Assessment (EA)
 - At least 45 days to over 100 days to complete depending on consultations required
 - Required if project is not exempt 58.34 or categorically excluded at 58.35
 - New construction
 - Increased density over maximum thresholds of a CEST
 - Increased capacity of 20% or more
 - Must discuss possible alternatives
 - Review Results
 - Accept project if no significant impact (FONSI/RROF)
 - Reject project if significant and unavoidable adverse impacts
 - Require EIS



FONSI, RROF and AUGF Process

- Submission of certified Request for Release of Funds (RROF) to HUD
 - Requires 15-day public comment period following Citizen Participation Plan
 - Posting on website or in newspaper; news release; social media posts, stakeholder notification
- Publication of Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
 - Requires 15-day public comment period (in conjunction with RROF)
- Receive Authorization to Use Grant Funds (AUGF) from HUD prior to initiating project
 - Requires 15 days for objections



Re-evaluation or Updates to Review

- If there is a substantial change to the nature, magnitude or extent of the project
 - New activities not anticipated
 - Wider project area
 - New circumstances and environmental conditions



Common Monitoring Findings

- Spending funds before the environmental review is completed
- Insufficient project description
 - Leads to wrong level of review determination
 - Does not incorporate all related activities
- Incorrect level of review determination
 - Leads to incorrect analysis of laws and authorities
- Not completing the NOI/RROF process (converting to exempt when not appropriate)



Item V. Homeowner Rehab Program Presentation



Housing Rehabilitation Program

- Funding is provided through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended at 24 CFR Part 570.
- Financial assistance is provided to low- and moderate-income households to:
 - ✓ Revitalize and preserve existing housing stock
 - ✓ Encourage long-term residency and aging in place for low-income homeowners
 - ✓ Eliminate unhealthy/hazardous conditions and provide decent, safe, sanitary living conditions to homeowners
 - ✓ Eliminate barriers to accessibilities and improve safety for homeowners with disabilities
 - ✓ Reduce energy costs/usage through energy conservation measures
- Homeowners can receive up to \$40,000 through a five-year forgivable loan.
 - The loan ensures the property is maintained and used by an eligible household
- All work performed by licensed contractors, vetted by the County.
- The primary goal of the program is to enable individuals to stay in their homes and maintain affordable housing stock.



Eligible Activities

- Variety of repairs can be completed with focus on health and safety, preserving affordable housing stock, and eliminate barriers for persons with disabilities.
- Most common repairs include roofing, gutters, accessibility improvements, plumbing and electrical repairs.
- Funds cannot be used for repairs covered under homeowner's insurance, additions or detached structures, or costs already incurred by the homeowner.



Eligibility Requirements

- Must live in unincorporated Clark County, Battle Ground, Washougal, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Yacolt, or Woodland city limits.
- Applicant must be the homeowner, and the residence must be the applicants' primary residence.
- Households cannot have more than \$445,000 in equity form all assets.
- Households must have homeowner's insurance and be current on property taxes.
- Homeowner must have occupied the home for the past 365-days.
- Homeowner must not have received previous assistance through the program; this is one-time per household, per lifetime.
- Requested repairs must be within the program guidelines and must meet HUD's minimum Housing Quality Standards (HQS).
- Home cannot be listed for sale, short sale, or in foreclosure process.
- Homeowners with reverse mortgages or balloon payments due within 60-months are ineligible.



Application Process

- Homeowner contacts HRP staff to be placed on the waitlist
 - Staff determine preliminary eligibility
 - Expected wait time is currently over 12 months
 - If repairs needed are determined emergent by our Housing Rehab Specialist, the homeowner can be moved to the front of the line
- Within six-months of expected assistance, staff collect all documentation to verify eligibility
- Housing Rehab Specialist inspects property and estimates what repairs can be completed
- Staff bids project using contractors selected by homeowner; homeowner gets final say on contractor used for project
- Housing Rehab Specialist oversees the project until completion



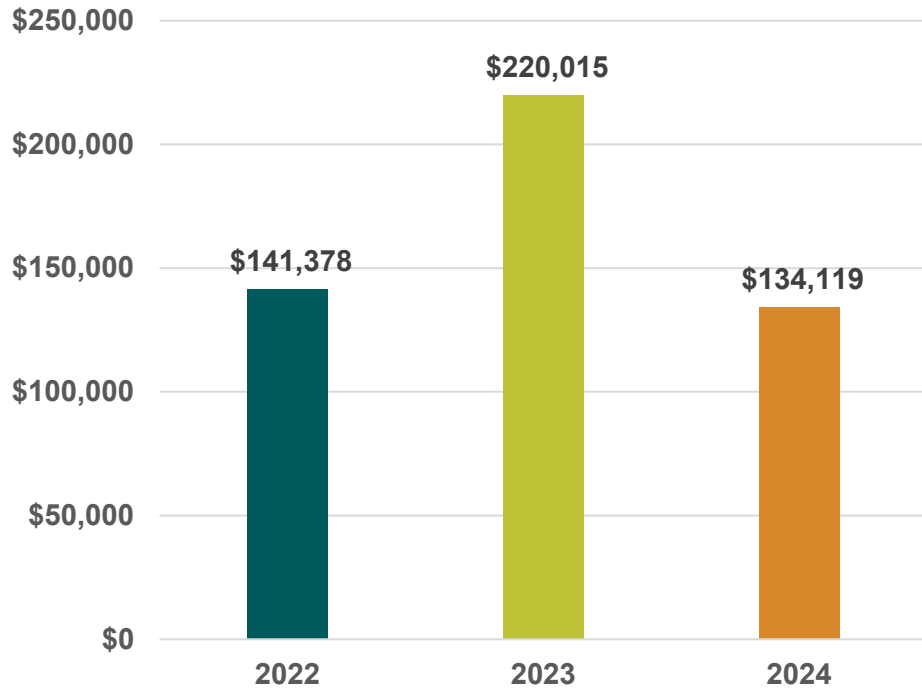
Applicants Pending 2024

- 4 Projects in Construction
- 5 Jobs in Pre-construction
- 13 Approved Applicants in Construction Queue
- 35 Applicants on Waitlist

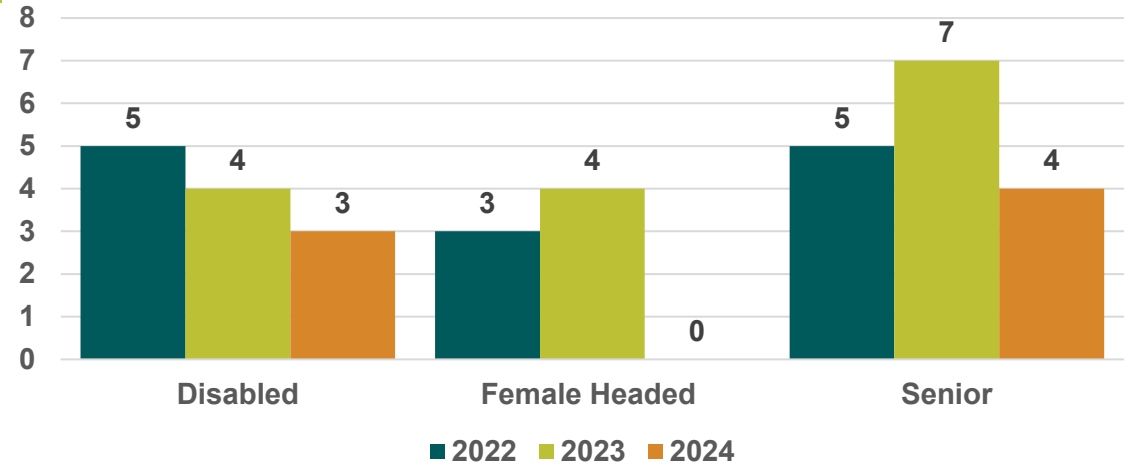


Households Served

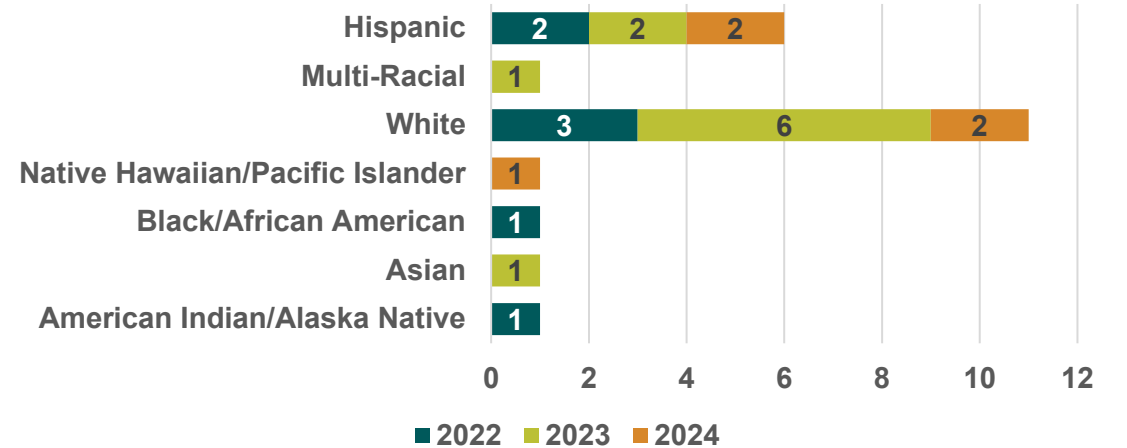
Expenditures



Households Served: Other Demographics



Households Served: Race and Ethnicity



Before & After Project Successes



Roof repair before



Roof repair after



Before & After Project Successes



Front porch before



Front porch ramp after

Before & After Project Successes



Sidewalk walkway before



Sidewalk ramp after



Before & After Project Successes



Septic drain field before



Backyard septic tanks before

Before & After Project Successes



Septic drain field in progress



New septic and drain field after



Questions?

any questions?



Thank You



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<https://clark.wa.gov/community-services/housing-rehabilitation>



VI. 2025 UCPB Meeting Planning (info)

- **Are there trainings or discussions that you would like to have next year?**
- **Planned topics**
 - January-March: RFA and regular business
 - Consolidated Plan review in May
 - Return on investment comparison: TBRA and multi-family housing development
- **Optional topics**
 - Section 3 training
- **Meeting Schedule: January 13, February 10, March 10, May 12, September 8, November 10**



Wrap Up

VII. Other

- Public Comment
- Good of the Order

***Save the Date - next UCPB meeting:
January 13, 2025, 9:30am - 11:00am***

