

Overview

The Chatham County Housing Trust Fund was created in 2018 by the Chatham County Board of Commissioners with the goal of affirmatively furthering fair housing choice for all residents. Housing Trust Fund money is intended to support the provision of low interest loans and modest grants to encourage development of new affordable housing or preservation of existing affordable housing within Chatham County. The fund may also provide smaller grants for reimbursement of fees related to affordable housing development or for studies and other housing related projects if funding allows.

Housing Trust Fund Management

Funding for the Housing Trust Fund is approved as part of the annual county budget cycle at the discretion of the Board of Commissioners. This typically includes an allocation from the Chatham County General Fund, leftover fund balance from prior fiscal years, and a portion of revenue received from county sales taxes.

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee oversees the annual application and review process with support from county staff. Following solicitation of proposals, the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee reviews applications and provides recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. Funding decisions are ultimately the prerogative of the Board of Commissioners.

If additional funds are made available after the current Housing Trust Fund application cycle closes and projects have been selected and approved for award, the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee may recommend any of the following for approval by the Board of Commissioners:

1. Review requests that were not fully funded and recommend an additional award to the project(s) with the most points; or
2. Recommend that additional funds be added to the next fiscal year's Housing Trust Fund cycle; or
3. Recommend funds for other targeted strategic housing efforts; or
4. Decide to accept additional proposals outside of the traditional Housing Trust Fund Application and Award cycle.

Housing Trust Fund Priorities

Housing Trust Fund monies are used to advance the following priorities:

1. Construct and preserve affordable housing for low and moderate income households.
2. Support diverse affordable housing options, including varied housing types, sizes, and locations, with an emphasis on increasing affordable choices and mitigating harmful outcomes.
3. Preserve existing affordable housing through renovation, repair, and retrofitting or extension of affordability restrictions of existing legally binding affordable housing.
4. Provide safe and affordable housing options for all future residents, including older adults, people with physical, neural, or other disabilities, people who are or were experiencing homelessness, and veterans, among others.
5. Support sustainable development with attention to environmentally conscious materials or architecture and strategies to reduce the environmental impact of new development.

6. Encourage high impact or innovative models of affordable housing.

Eligibility Criteria

The Chatham County Housing Trust Fund will financially support proposals that address affordable housing needs while in line with North Carolina State Statutes and requirements established by Chatham County policies. In addition:

1. All projects must fulfill the public purpose of providing affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households. The following definitions and limitations apply in this context:
 - a. "Households" refers to any number of persons sharing a dwelling unit, including individuals living alone.
 - b. "Affordable housing" refers to dwelling units for which the sum of occupancy expenses do not exceed thirty (30) percent of the occupant's gross income.
 - c. "Low-income" refers to incomes not greater than sixty (60) percent of the Area Median Income for different household sizes in Chatham County as reported by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
 - d. "Moderate Income" refers to incomes not greater than eighty (80) percent of the Area Median Income for different household sizes in Chatham County as reported by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
2. All projects must take place within Chatham County and must comply with applicable planning and zoning requirements.
3. All applicants must provide regular reports on impacts, expenditures, and other relevant information as established in an awardee agreement.
4. All awardees must be eligible for receipt of public funds in North Carolina and Chatham County.
5. Applicants must have a valid tax identification number and be an organization, agency, state, or local government.
6. The county does not fund start-up agencies. All agencies that apply for funding must have been in operation for at least three (3) years prior to being considered for a grant award.
7. Agencies may not apply for funding for the same program from different county sources.
8. Nonprofit agencies that are funded as part of the general fund may not apply for annual competitive funding awards via this policy.

Reviewed by Chatham County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee: August 1, 2024