



Redevelopment Authority of the County of Berks

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DATE: March 26, 2024

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Board of the Redevelopment Authority

FROM: WHRP Team

SUBJECT: Report of Progress

COPIES: files

Background

The Pennsylvania Whole-Homes Repairs Program was announced in November 2022. The purpose of the program is to provide funding for county-wide agencies to address habitability and safety concerns, provide measures to improve energy or water efficiency and make units accessible for individuals with disabilities. The WHRP is administered through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Grants are provided to homeowners with an annual income at or below 80% of the Area Median Income and loans are provided to landlords who rent to tenants with an annual income at or below 60% of the Area Median Income. The Pennsylvania Program allowed 4% of the grant for general administration, 10% for delivery costs, and required funds to be allocated for workforce development.

The Redevelopment Authority was chosen by the County of Berks to be the grantee of the Pennsylvania Whole-Home Repairs Program (WHRP). The Authority entered into a funding agreement with the Commonwealth dated March 31, 2023 which provides a total grant of \$3,684,308. The term of the agreement is December 12, 2022 through December 31, 2026.

The Authority developed the Berks County Whole-Home Repairs Program based upon an existing housing rehabilitation program. The Authority selected Habitat for Humanity of Berks County to assist with the administration of the program within the City of Reading. The Authority also selected Berks Connections Pre-Trial Services (currently known as Connections Work) to administer the workforce development requirement. The Authority began accepting applications on March 13, 2023 and closed applications on 7/11/2023.

Budget

| Category | Total | Expended | Balance |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Administration | \$146,262 | \$81,378.34 | \$64,883.66 |
| Delivery | \$365,655 | \$182,317.17 | \$183,337.83 |
| Workforce Development | \$300,000 | \$74,786.55 | \$225,213.45 |
| Rehabilitation | \$2,872,391 | \$970,538.16 | \$1,901,852.84 |
| Total | \$3,684,308 | \$1,309,020.22 | \$2,375,287.78 |

Applications

| Status | Number |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Applications Received | 228 |
| Applications Approved | 47 |
| Applications Denied | 134 |
| Applications under review | 23 |
| Project Completed | 24 |
| Waiting List (awaiting application) | 27 |

Comments

1. Having to pay State Prevailing Wage Rates over \$25,000 prevents many contractors from bidding.
2. Numerous properties require more than the program limit of \$50,000.
3. Applications were denied due to income ineligibility, incomplete applications, or project cost overrun.
4. Numerous applicants needed technical support to properly diagnose repairs needed.
5. Homeowners were thankful and appreciative of the program and the technical support provided to them.