

WAP Enhancement & Innovation Grant

Organization: Rebuilding Together New Orleans

Project Title: Bolstering Efficiency Retrofits with Substantial Repairs to Foster Continuum Care for Energy Burdened Homeowners

Major Participants: Louisiana Housing Corporation, Energy Smart New Orleans, Louisiana Green Corps

Objectives: Create a continuum of care for elderly homeowners in need of critical home repairs that address weatherization needs. Specific target objectives for this program include:

1. Assisting 400 low-income, energy burdened residents with deep energy retrofits such as roofs and siding replacement across 300 projects;
2. Successfully transitioning 225 homeowners into LHC's WAP program post project completion and/or completing WAP repairs in-house; and
3. Providing workforce development and skills training to 100 local opportunity youth.

Description: 74% of New Orleans residents live in "heat islands," pockets of land where the temperature is eight degrees higher than the average. Decades of discriminatory housing practices such as redlining combined with stagnant wages have disproportionately affected Black residents, forcing them into these heat islands in search of more affordable housing. This is only exacerbated by poor quality housing stock, where low-income residents cannot afford the critical repairs their homes need to optimize energy efficiency and overall home health and safety. Such residents are unable to qualify to state-administered WAP repairs because of deferred maintenance and ongoing natural disaster impacts. The proposed program addresses these substantial repairs to bring homes up to eligibility requirements for WAP, with the intent of then completing WAP repairs using other funding sources to avoid loss of homeowner trust and project files in a revolving case management process between agencies.

Potential Impact: RTNO expects interventions to impact 300 households over the three-year grant period. These households will receive repairs that not only make the home safer and healthier, but give them access to WAP repairs after being denied due to deferred maintenance and substantial scopes of work. Homes will ultimately become more energy efficient and less susceptible to the damage and unaffordability of heat islands across the city.

Community Benefits Plan Goals:

- The project's Education Coordinator will engage with local trades programs and schools to ensure opportunities with RTNO are open to all who are interested, with a specific focus on opportunity youth.
- Complete 30 engagement events in disadvantaged communities, including but not limited to neighborhood association meetings, community activist meetings, council meetings, etc.
- Perform 100% of completed pre-WAP repairs and deep energy efficiency retrofits for disadvantaged residents (low-income, minority, etc)
- Create 10 partnerships with workforce development programs and training centers

- Engage 100 opportunity youth in energy efficiency repairs and training
- Transition 50 opportunity youth from energy efficiency training to full time weatherization-related positions