

Legistar #200904
Attachment B

Home Energy and Water Efficiency Initiative



GCRA & CWC Partnership Guidelines

As approved by the Gainesville City Commission
through Resolution ___ on __/__/2021



Gainesville
Community
Reinvestment
Area



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PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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The Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area ("GCRA") was created in 2019 through the adoption of Ordinance 181001. The goal of the GCRA is to encourage investment in underserved areas within the district.

Section 1. About the Initiative

The proposed Reinvestment Area Home Energy and Water Efficiency Initiative is a partnership between the Community Weatherization Coalition (CWC) of Alachua County and Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area (GCRA). The vision of this Initiative is to strengthen neighborhoods by maintaining the culture and population of the district neighborhoods through long term residency. The mission being to directly benefit community members by lowering their monthly utility bill and thus increasing the number of energy and water efficient homes in the District. Residents with inefficient appliances, poorly functioning air conditioning, and water leaks may spend hundreds to thousands of dollars in additional annual costs. In addition, areas of poor quality housing and a large numbers of inefficient homes can destabilize communities by leading to a high turnover rate for permanent residents.

The CWC currently provides free services to homeowners through the Home Energy Tune-up (Tier 1) and Upgrade (Tier 2) Programs. The Tune-up (Tier 1) Program offers a free kit that contains water and energy saving supplies, as well as education on conservation behaviors. These supplies include energy-efficient light bulbs, water-saving showerheads, and toilet tank displacement bags. The Upgrade (Tier 2) Program offers more permanent energy upgrade services such as installation of attic and underfloor insulation, water heater replacement, and window pane replacement. Both programs are designed to lower the residential energy cost burden—or the percent of a resident's annual household income that goes toward energy costs.

Through the partnership, the GCRA would provide funding for each low income participant or lessor (within the district) the CWC provides services to. The objective is to increase the number of energy and water efficient homes and expand the program to rental property owners (lessors). By helping residents save money on energy costs, the Initiative supports the GCRA 10 Year Reinvestment Plan goals.

The Reinvestment Plan supports the Initiative's vision through the Plan's "Community Enhancement and Housing Objective." The purpose of this objective is to directly benefit community members by maintaining the culture and population of neighborhoods. The Gainesville City Commission's Strategic Plan also outlines steps to create a "Great Place to Live & Experience" (Goal 3) by increasing affordable housing opportunities for both ownership and rental units.

Section 2. Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Recipients must either be a homeowner, or lessor, who owns or resides within the GCRA District.

Homeowner & Renter Eligibility

To be eligible, Homeowners and Renters must make an annual income that is at or below HUD low-income guidelines (see website or contact a staff member for information about what qualifies as low income), or are currently spending 10% or more of their annual income on utilities, AND are responsible for paying for their utility usage. Both Homeowners and Renters are eligible for the Tune-up Program (Tier 1). To be eligible for the Upgrade Program (Tier 2), a homeowner must homestead their property. Lessors may also apply to participate in the the Upgrade Program (Tier 2).

Section 2. Eligibly Requirements (Continued)

Lessor Eligibility

Lessors must be a residential rental property owner and are required to sign a work agreement agreeing to lock-in the existing rental rate for at least one year from the completion of the completed upgrade. The Lessor must provide a copy of the rental agreement or other proof of rental rate for the twelve months after completion of the upgrades to be eligible for reimbursements. The Lessor is able to apply for assistance for up to four units per year.

Property Eligibility

The property or unit must be primarily residential. The following properties are eligible under the Program:

- Single-family homes
- Duplex
- Triplex
- Quadplex
- Mobile Homes

Section 3. What is Offered

The Initiative will offer assistance to homeowners and lessors ("Recipients") through the CWC's Home Energy Tune-up and Upgrade Programs to identify ways to reduce water and energy use. The overall goal being to save recipients money on utility costs through retrofits and education.

Tier 1, also known as the Home Energy Tune-Up Program, offers a free kit that contains water and energy-saving supplies as well as education on conservation behaviors. Improvements may be volunteer-led or Recipients can perform "Do-it-yourself" DIY improvements to a property through virtual guidance by the CWC. . Services and supplies may include:

- Resident utility bill review and education
- Energy-efficient light bulbs
- Water-saving showerheads and faucet aerators
- Pipe insulation on AC refrigerant line and hot water heater
- Toilet tank banks/displacement bags
- Evaluation of the efficiency of major appliances
- Cleaning refrigerator coils
- Checking air filters
- Conservation behavior education (tips on thermostat settings, using a power strip, etc.)

Tier 2, also known as the Home Energy Upgrade Program , offers energy upgrades to Recipients. Homeowners may receive free home energy upgrades performed by volunteers and contractors after completing the Tune-up Program (Tier 1).

Lessors may receive Upgrade Program assistance for up to four residential rental units. After the initial Tier 1 Tune-Up is complete the Lessor is eligible for a 50% reimbursement of up to \$1,000.00 per unit for labor or materials towards eligible Tier 2 upgrades they make to their property under the program. Sweat equity or work the Lessor does themselves is not eligible for reimbursement. Payment will be made directly from the CWC to the Lessor within 30 days upon project completion and inspection/verification by CWC staff.

Section 3. What is Offered (Continued)

Upgrade services include:

- Attic and underfloor insulation
- Water heater replacement
- WaterSense toilet installation
- Refrigerator replacement with Energy Star® unit
- Energy Star® rated windowpane replacement
- Window AC (and/or AC/heat combo) unit replacement with Energy Star® unit
- Minor plumbing leak repairs
- Nest thermostat installation
- Window screen repair/replacement
- Window film installation (tinting)
- Door adjustments/threshold or door sweep replacements
- Sealing air leaks (caulking, weatherstripping, etc.)

For information and applications, please visit the link to the Home Energy Tune-ups Community Weatherization Coalition website.

Availability of Funding

Grants will be awarded on a first qualified, first serve basis, and are subject to the availability of GCRA funding

SECTION 4: Program Steps

Program Steps for Homeowners and Renters

- Step 1.** Application: Recipient applies to the (DIY or volunteer-led) Home Energy Tune-up Program following this link: [Home Energy Tune-ups Community Weatherization Coalition](#)
- Step 2.** Approval: After the Program application is approved, Recipients will receive an initial phone consultation with CWC staff to discuss possible issues and arrange either their DIY tune-up kit dispersal or schedule a volunteer-led inspection.
- Step 3.** Tier 1: Tune Up Program Inspection:
- Through either virtual means or volunteer-led, the CWC will inspect the property, and sources of lost energy and water will be identified, and major appliances will be examined.
 - A kit of water and energy-saving supplies, as well as education on conservation behaviors, will be provided to the Recipient.
 - Recipients perform DIY improvements to their own property through virtual guidance by the CWC, or CWC volunteers perform improvements.
- Step 4.** Tier 2: Home Energy Upgrade Program (Homeowner)
Based upon the findings/needs-assessment of the inspection report, the CWC may arrange for contractors to visit and perform work on selected homes, or arrange for appliance replacement, once a work agreement is signed by the homeowner.
- Step 5.** Completion: If an upgrade was performed by a CWC contractor or volunteer, CWC staff will inspect to verify improvements were made.

SECTION 4: Program Steps (Continued)

Program Steps for Lessors

- Step 1.** A CWC home Energy Tune-up is completed at the residence, following application by the renter following this link: [Home Energy Tune-ups Community Weatherization Coalition](#).
- Step 2.** Application: Lessor applies to the Home Energy Upgrade Program through the CWC. Up to four units are eligible for assistance per year.
- Step 3.** Approval: After the Program application is approved, Lessor will receive an initial phone consultation with CWC staff to discuss possible issues and arrange an initial inspection.
- Step 4.** If deemed a fitting candidate for next-level upgrades, CWC will offer a 50% reimbursement with a maximum of \$1,000 per unit to Lessors for specific upgrade(s).
- Step 5.** Quotes: The Lessor obtains three quotes from CWC/GCRA approved contractors for upgrade improvements that includes cost per unit. These cost estimates must be for the same improvements. The Lessor can choose whichever contractor they wish, but the matching grant funds will not exceed the lowest cost estimate. Sweat equity, or work the Lessor does themselves, is not reimbursable.
- Step 6.** Quote Approval: The CWC approves the quote for work to begin.
- Step 7.** Home Energy Upgrade: The Lessor arranges and completes the upgrade.
- Step 8.** Final Inspection: The Lessor contacts the CWC to arrange a final inspection of work performed prior to reimbursement.
- Step 9.** Completion/Reimbursement: After work is approved by the CWC, the CWC reimburses the Lessor for 50% of the total approved original quote (within 30 days) which may amount up to, but not more than, a \$1,000.00 reimbursement per unit. Any costs exceeding original quote are ineligible under the Program.