



## HUMAN SERVICES AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

**DATE:** May 20, 2021

**TO:** Chairman Marnie George and the Housing Finance Authority of Leon County

**FROM:** Shington Lamy, Director of Human Services and Community Partnerships  
Matthew G. Wyman, Housing Services Manager

**SUBJECT:** County Staff Report for June 17, 2021 & Budget Request

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This County staff report is provided by the Leon County Division of Housing Services to the Housing Finance Authority of Leon County (HFA) for the June 17, 2021 HFA meeting. The report presents Housing Services' formal budget request for FY 2022 and also presents an update to program guidelines of the Emergency Housing Repair Program administered by the County and funded by the HFA.

### Fiscal Year 2022 Funding Requests

In accordance with the Interlocal Agreement between the County and HFA, the HFA will adopt an estimated budget for County-adopted programs and/or HFA-adopted programs by June 15 prior to the start of each fiscal year. **County staff is requesting that the HFA increase funding to \$78,000 for Fiscal Year 2022 to the Emergency Short-Term Housing Repair Program, the Leon County Home Expo, and the Leon County 9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service.**

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the FY 2022 level funding request with comparison to the funding allocated for FY 2021.

<b>Table 1. County Funding Request, FY2021 vs. FY2022</b>			
<u>Program</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>	<u>FY 2022</u>	<u>Diff%</u>
Emergency Short-Term Housing Repair Program	\$50,000	\$75,000	50%
Leon County Home Expo	\$1,500	\$1,500	0%
9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service	\$1,500	\$1,500	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$53,000</b>	<b>\$78,000</b>	0%

### *Emergency Housing Repair Program*

The HFA provides funding to the Division of Housing Services to assist low-income residents with emergency home repairs. There continues to be high demand for the Emergency Housing Repair Program in the community particularly for homes that are not eligible for the State Housing Initiatives Partnerships. Housing Services expects to expend all of the \$53,000 allocated to the program for FY 2021 as over \$37,000 has been committed to eligible households as reported in the **May 31, 2021 Emergency Housing Repair (Attachment #1)**.

Construction costs have increased significantly since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Factory shutdowns and logistical issues have increased the cost of imported materials up to 60%

while lumber prices have increased at least 130% since mid-April of 2020 according to the National Association of Homebuilders. Additionally, as will be discussed later in this report, adding City of Tallahassee addresses will increase the amount of homes that could be serviced by the program. Therefore, County staff requests that the HFA increase funding for this program by 50% to \$75,000.

#### *Leon County Home Expo*

Historically, the HFA has been a financial sponsor of the Annual Home Expo which offers potential and existing homeowners information on down payment assistance, minor home repair and home maintenance tips through live presentations, panel discussions and a host of local vendors marketing their services. Last year, video recordings of all the major presentations were posted on multiple County internet sites. The Home Expo was last held on Saturday, April 13, 2019 and saw a record number of participants.

Unfortunately, in these unusual times of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was not held in FY 2020 however, on September 10, 2020, the HFA approved the reallocation of FY 2020 funding for the Home Expo to the Emergency Housing Repair program.

The County is considering holding the next Home Expo in Fall 2021. County staff anticipates holding an in-person event for FY 2022 and as such is requesting level funding.

#### *9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service*

The County's 9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service event is usually held annually to help revitalize a neighborhood in an unincorporated area of the County. Typically, County staff, community partners and volunteers provide minor home rehabilitation and landscape projects to residents in commemoration of the spirit of community displayed following the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Each year, the 9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service is held on the third Thursday in the month of August. The 9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service was last held on August 22, 2019, the County anticipates an in-person 9/11 Day of Service event to occur this year to coincide with the 20-year anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup>.

Unfortunately, in these unusual times of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was not held in FY 2020 however, on September 10, 2020, the HFA approved the reallocation of FY 2020 funding for the County's 9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service event to the Emergency Housing Repair program.

The County is considering holding the next 9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service event in Fall 2021. County staff anticipates holding an in-person event for FY 2022 and as such is requesting level funding.

#### HFA Emergency Home Repairs Program Guidelines

On April 8, 2021, the HFA approved a new Interlocal Agreement (Agreement) with the Board of County Commissioners which outlines the County's and HFA's mutual commitment in the coordination and collaboration of affordable housing and details the County and HFA's respective responsibilities, which includes the HFA's funding of the County's housing programs and services. As established in the Agreement, the HFA will continue to be a strategic and financial partner for the County's housing programs and services including, but not limited to the

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Emergency Repair Program, the Annual Home Expo and the 9/11 Day of Service. The Board of County Commissioners approved the new Interlocal Agreement on May 11, 2021.

The new Agreement allows County staff and the HFA to mutually establish guidelines of programs administered by the County such as the Mobile Home & Short-Term Emergency Repair (Program). Recently, the program has been extremely effective in assisting homeowners residing in unincorporated Leon County earning 80% or below of Area Median Income (AMI) make repairs to their home that are not SHIP eligible, most often to older mobile homes or to address an immediate need to protect a home from further damage (such as leaking roofs, plumbing leaks, etc.) or reduce the risk of health hazards (such as septic pump outs, electrical issues, etc.).

Due to extreme increases in the costs of the most typical repairs conducted by the HFA funded Program, the proposed guidelines (Attachment #1) include an increase the long-standing lifetime limits of \$1,650 and \$7,500 for households that include an elderly person or a person with special needs as defined in Section 420.0004 F.S. be increased to \$2,000 and \$12,000 respectively. As discussed in the budget request section of this report, lumber and other material cost increases have significantly impacted the cost of the most prevalent repairs (roofs, septic HVAC replacements) funded by the program while labor shortages continue to drive construction costs higher due to unexpected demand in homebuilding.

The proposed Program guidelines add mobile homes that are in the City of Tallahassee limits to potentially eligible properties. Additionally, the proposed Program guidelines incorporate the relaxed income eligibility standards that have allowed the HFA funded program to support rapid deployment of needed repairs and aligns the requirements with the County's SHIP funded Emergency Home Repair program. The SHIP requirements proposed to be included in the guidelines are requiring the owner to be current on property taxes, mortgages, etc. when repair costs exceed \$2,000; cap liquid assets at \$30,000; require utilization of proceeds from insurance to make repairs when appropriate; and require properties be insured against flooding when in a 100-year plain when repair costs exceed \$2,000.

**Options:**

1. Approve the \$75,000 Fiscal Year 2022 budget request for the Emergency Short-Term Housing Repair Program, the Leon County Home Expo, and the Leon County 9/11 Day of Remembrance and Service.
2. Do not approve the \$75,000 Fiscal Year 2022 budget request.
3. Approve the Proposed Emergency Housing Repair program guidelines funded by the Housing Finance Authority.
4. Do not approve the Proposed Emergency Housing Repair program guidelines funded by the Housing Finance Authority
5. Board direction.

**Attachment(s):**

1. Emergency Short-Term Housing Repair FY 2021 Report as of May 31