

From: DEROTHEA WILLIAMS <derotheawilliams@att.net>
Subject: Blue Horizons Project - Weatherization Services - United Community Development of North Carolina
To: ron.venturella@buncombecounty.org <ron.venturella@buncombecounty.org>
Cc: Avril Pinder <avril.pinder@buncombecounty.org>; Debra Campbell <dcampbell@ashevillenc.gov>; Amy Patterson <apatterson@ashevillenc.gov>; Maggie Ullman <maggiuellman@avlcouncil.com>; JV Farr <farr77331@gmail.com>; Bennie Miller <mudface313@charter.net>; Damain Poole <damainpoole@gmail.com>; Eldertomw <eldertomw@gmail.com>; Spencer Jones <jonesgr@bellsouth.net>; Jeremiah LeRoy <jeremiah.leroy@buncombecounty.org>; Bridget Herring <bherring@ashevillenc.gov>; Julie Mayfield <julievmayfield@gmail.com>; Dwight Mullen <dbmullen@unca.edu>
Sent: June 8, 2023 7:43 AM (UTC-04:00)
Attached: BHP - RFP Cover Letter & Proposal.docx

Good Morning Mr. Venturella:

Please find attached a proposal from United Community Development of North Carolina (UCD) which provides a quotation for a portion of Weatherization installation services for the Blue Horizons Project. This proposal also quotes Blower Door Testing to substantiate energy savings to homes "pre and post" installation of measures which are installed to stop air infiltration and to help these low income citizens to save money on utility costs so that they may use those savings for food, medicine, and to help them enhance the quality of their lives.

We respectfully request that this contract be segmented to allow Black led nonprofits such as UCD and BIPOC individuals to participate with more equity in these "bundled" contracts which combine "administration", "education/outreach to BIPOC community", "weatherization installation along with testing measures", etc.

For almost 3 years UCD was the subcontractor to the prime contractor and the contract was terminated on 5/15/23 to accommodate "administrative/business convenience". Our presence was added as a subcontractor with Green Opportunities at the initiation of the contract. We were initially informed that our organization would be excluded from participation as a subcontractor in deference to Green Opportunities. After my objections, the subcontract was "split" between UCD and Green Opportunities with Green Opportunities walking off the contract. UCD stayed and has served the prime and the community with dignity and excellence until we were terminated for "business/administrative convenience" as of 5/15/2023.

UCD is the only remaining Black led 501(c)3 home weatherization/ home construction/repair/workforce development training program which exists in WNC. We are successful because we adhere to data driven outcomes, high quality standards, and most importantly, we treat our clients with LOVE and their homes with respect, irrespective of any conditions. We respectfully request that UCD continue to be given an earned opportunity to serve our community on this project performing Weatherization, for we have done nothing wrong and the case for "business convenience" is non sequitur. .

The City and County governments cannot continue to merely talk about "operationalizing equity", while simultaneously allowing the bundling of contracts to fit the profile of organizations which the respective City and County governments use to resource/facilitate the convening of work groups/councils like the Blue Horizons Community Council Project 3 years ago. This is simply not the way to increase "diversity, equity, or inclusion." United Community Development of North Carolina attended these meetings, as well and we hoped that because our Black community which is disproportionately affected by environmental racism, along with the line item in the RFP which alludes to "increasing BIPOC membership in BHPCC, would allow participation in the project by a cognizant and competent Black-led nonprofit.

We have provided a quotation for a portion of Weatherization installation services, Blower Door Testing, and education/marketing to our community, which we held to under the \$30,000 threshold to accommodate an informal bid process to segment and to award these line items in this current proposal.

We respectfully request that this contract be UN-bundled and segmented to provide equal opportunity. This intervention was provided 3 years ago to provide UCD and similarly situated Black led institutions and individuals who are disproportionately affected by climate change, some real opportunity to participate. We request the same level of consideration, based on performance and restorative justice .

Please contact me if you have questions or if further clarification is needed.

Very truly yours,

Dee

Dee Williams, Project Manager,
United Community Dev. of North Carolina
85 Choctaw St., Lower Level

Dee Williams, President/CEO
Dee Williams and Company, Inc.
136 Wyoming Rd.
Asheville, NC 28803
Phone: 828-275-6217

President/CEO
Eagles' Wings Community Development Corporation
P.O. Box 450
Asheville, NC 28802

" Civil rights without economic clout is a borrowed event - they can be taken away at any time."
Joshua Smith, CEO, the Maxim Corporation



85 Choctaw Street, Lower Level
Asheville, NC 28801
Ph: 828-275-6217

June 9, 2023

Mr. Ron Venturella, Purchasing Manager
Buncombe County

Via Email: Ron.Venturella@buncombecounty.org

IN RE: Blue Horizons Project Management – Weatherization Services Only

Good Morning Mr. Venturella:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a bid proposal for execution of the Blue Horizons Project for the City of Asheville and Buncombe County. Specifically, our proposal is for installation of weatherization measures to reduce infiltration, collect utility data, blower door test results if applicable(done on all electric homes), photos of projects with measures completed, and to facilitate field verification of at least 5% of houses completed. United Community Development of North Carolina, in conjunction with another Black led nonprofit is participating in the Justice 40 Project, which was initiated in January 2021, by Executive Order 14008- Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad – which mandates that at least 40% of the benefits of certain federal programs with investments in clean energy and energy efficiency, clean transit, affordable/sustainable housing, training and workforce development, the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution, and the development of clean water infrastructure, must flow to disadvantaged communities(DAC's). www.energy.gov/em/justice40-initiative

“The Justice 40 Initiative” , which aims to deliver 40 percent of the overall benefits of federal investments in climate and clean energy to disadvantaged communities is/has been a focus of the development of UCD in its collaborations with more than 80 churches in Asheville/Buncombe and WNC, since UCD began its initial subcontract for the Blue Horizons Project with the Green Built Alliance via Energy Savers Network. This collaboration began as a result of the systemic exclusion of UCD and other Black led nonprofits in the local climate justice/remediation movement.

In 2020, with a grant from the Dogwood Health Trust, UCD 's Project Manager and Board was approached to organize and to lead over 70 predominantly Black led churches in a coalition to provide organizational and resource capacity in the areas of green infrastructure, life/safety home repairs, weatherization, workforce development, and permanently affordable mixed use mixed income housing. In 2021, Eagles' Wings CDC was provided a 501©3 and would focus on affordable housing and economic development, while United Community Development would focus on home weatherization, construction, and skills training in the Green Economy.

United Community Development of North Carolina has been a 501©3 corporation since 2018. Its mission is to alleviate the suffering and displacement of low income, elderly and disabled people through home health and safety repairs, weatherization, de-cluttering, particularly African-Americans. These measures prevent further gentrification in legacy neighborhoods, allow energy savings which reduce utility bills and allow these savings to be used on other things like food and medicine, and they reduce the carbon footprint.

Our recent 3-year capacity-building grant from WNC Bridge Foundation for \$150K has allowed UCD to build a functional website which is updated, and to hire a professional marketing firm with a 12-month contract which will feature our Justice 40 Weatherization, Home Repair , Green Infrastructure Programs. We also are able to market to the congregations of over 40 Black churches in Asheville/Buncombe, alone, via our collaboration with Eagles' Wings CDC, a predominantly Black church-led economic development consortium of over 80 Black churches from Murphy to Hickory, NC. This collaboration was facilitated by a grant from the Dogwood Health Trust. We have also built a working collaborative partnership with Community Action Opportunities and Habitat for Humanity by providing referrals when projects are outside UCD's scope and resource capability.

UCD has provided weatherization installation services as a subcontractor to Energy Savers Network for 3 years, since inception of the Blue Horizons Project . UCD is the lone remaining Black led nonprofit in WNC which provides home repairs and Weatherization. This subcontract and this opportunity to provide culturally competent education and installation services was terminated on May 15, 2023, by Energy Savers Network because of " administrative/business convenience", as described by them. Our Crew collected client income information, provided before/after photos, and completed service applications for ESN in a professional and competent fashion for less than \$19,000 for 40 homes/year.

UCD will work with the Black Church Associations to educate their memberships about what how vital their participation is in the Energy Awareness Movement in Asheville/Buncombe and WNC , along with the obstacles which Black-led organizations face in accessing contracts and viable opportunities to provide these services and to lead initiatives in their communities. These community sessions are set for Juneteenth through July 2023 and will also be featured as a part of the anecdotal information and audit for the City of Asheville Disparity Study and the Reparations Commission of Asheville/Buncombe County, respectively.

"The Justice 40 Initiative" , which aims to deliver 40 percent of the overall benefits of federal investments in climate and clean energy to disadvantaged communities is/has been a focus of the development of UCD in its collaboration with more than 80 churches in Asheville/Buncombe and WNC. UCD will also apply for funding, fellowships, and T/A from the DOE in facilitating/over-coming existing barriers to accessing the programs and economic opportunities such as UCD has faced locally with bidding document construction, contract execution, and general business practices which have acted to historically exclude African-American led organizations and MBE business firms in climate justice and renewal energy initiatives.

We believe, based on UCD's commendable record of performance as a subcontractor on the previous contract for Blue Horizons, specifically for weatherization installations, that United Community Development of North Carolina (UCD) has performed in an exemplary manner and that segmentation of this Blue Horizons contract will expand diversity, equity, and inclusion by leveraging not only UCD's technical skills in weatherization and construction, but also our unique ability to convene, engage, and to mobilize our local community which will demonstrate the City and County's commitment to shared power and economic justice.

We look forward to serving all of our communities in an equitable way., and we look forward to working with the City and County on this energy saving and educational project which is vital to historically excluded and marginalized communities.

Thank you,

Dee Williams, Project Manager
United Community Development of North Carolina
Ph: 828-275-6217, 828-398-8771
Email: derotheawilliams@at.net
info@ucdofnc.org



Name: United Community Development of North Carolina

Address: 85 Choctaw St., Lower Level, Asheville, NC 28801

Phone: 828-275-6217

Authorized Representative: Dee Williams, Project Manager

Proposal Name: Buncombe County

Request for Proposal

Blue Horizons Project

Submitted via Email: Ron.Venturella@buncombecounty.org

June 7, 2023

Experience and Qualifications

The Team at United Community Development of NC has over 60 years of cumulative experience.

Dee Williams, Project Manager holds degrees in Accounting, Business Administration, and Economics, respectively. She also holds certifications from NCSU in Construction Management and Construction Estimating which were attained as a certified/ pre-qualified MBE firm with the USDOT/NCDOT in Highway/Roadway Construction. Williams holds certifications in Logistics & Supply Chain Management, Advanced Manufacturing, and she is the only Black female recipient of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Award for the Minority Construction Firm of the Year – Southeastern USA & Puerto Rico. Williams was selected as a Consultant by Dogwood Health Trust to organize over 80 Black Churches in WNC to become the largest Black led community economic development organization. That organization Eagles' Wings CDC is collaborating with UCD and the US Department of Energy in the "Justice 40" Project with UCD. This large consortium of churches will provide community outreach, referrals, and regional support for the energy upfits and education which will be done in the Black community across Asheville/Buncombe and WNC.

Thomas "Brad" Wynn has more than 30 years of experience in new vertical construction and major home renovations. He was educated and certified in Boston, MASS in the first Youth Build training program which was initiated by U.S. Senator John Kerry. Brad holds an A.A.S degree in Construction Management and he worked for over 25 years under his grandfather and father who both owned businesses in 3 counties in WNC with the last remaining commercial properties which were sold in the last five years in the River Arts District. Brad has specialized in teaching construction skills in the classroom and in the on-the-job training of Black boys and men who were out of school and/or previously incarcerated at Green Opportunities. Brad is also BPI certified in construction. He will also lead the construction social enterprise which will be jointly owned by UCD and Eagles' Wings CDC for the "Justice 40" Initiative which is a program of the U.S. Department of Energy. Brad is also a licensed Minister and he pastors a local church in Asheville.

United Community Development has performed as a subcontractor for weatherization installations, collected financial/income information and provided photos and other documentation, including client applications for Weatherization services for the Blue Horizons Project for 3 years, since inception, including serving as a member of the Blue Horizons Project Council, since inception. We desire to continue to provide these installation and reporting services since there is no other entity with the requisite cultural competence and the ability to grow the BIPOC membership of the Blue Horizons Project, given UCD's grant funds from WNC Bridge Foundation for this Project for the next two years and UCD's collaboration with over 80 Black churches in Asheville/Buncombe County and WNC for the US DOE Justice 40 Project.

Subcontractor – Jonathan Gach – Energy Home Inspection – Blower Door Testing

Jonathan Gach will be subcontracted by UCD to conduct "Whole Building (residential) with Consumption Analysis Evaluation Protocol which includes Blower Door test results of all electric homes with "before and after" weatherization measures are installed. Jonathan is self-employed with Energy Home Inspection as a real estate inspector and building diagnostician for residential and light commercial properties.

Jonathan was previously employed as the Energy Upgrade Manager for the Blue Horizons Project. UCD has worked with Jonathan as a trainer/mentor for our weatherization crews and he currently provides Blower Door testing for Community Action Opportunities in its Weatherization Program.

He will perform before and after Weatherization installation Blower Door testing on 30% or 13 homes (totally electric at the cost of \$250 each for a total cost of \$3,300. That amounts to 11.28% of the total contract of \$29,260.

Client References

1. Ms. Katheryn J. White, 284 – Weatherization, Life/Safe/Health Repairs
284 Brooklyn Rd., Asheville, NC 28803
Ph: 828-707-7591
2. Ms. Vanessa Bogany – Weatherization, De-Cluttering, Referral to Collaborative Agency w/ resources for Major Repairs((HVAC& Hot Water Systems Replacement, Asbestos Abatement) , 17 Monroe Pl., Asheville, NC 28801
Ph: 828-215-6022
3. Sam Ruark, Executive Director, Green Built Alliance/ESN -BHPPC Awardee Agency – FY 21-23
Ph: 828-301-0774 – UCD Subcontractor – Weatherization Services.
4. Rev. Dr. James Grant, 1st Vice Moderator, Mud Creek Regional Baptist Assn., Pastor Worldwide MB Church.
Ph: 828-280-2471.

Proposal – Blue Horizons Project

Deliverables

The contractor will complete the following Weatherization Installation Community Engagement, Education & Installment deliverables :

- (1A) Provide complete Weatherization Installation reporting including Client Intake/Application forms, income information, waivers, and other specified documentation, on a monthly or quarterly basis as required.
- (1B) Check in with City, County, or other BHP grantees, recipients/subrecipients or designee's regularly to update on Weatherization quantity and quality measures – initiatives and accomplishments.
- (1C) Provide reporting, administration, documentation(client information, including releases, income/financial information, releases, photos, etc.), crew management, risk management, including mitigation techniques and insurance as required, and Project Management throughout the duration of the contract, any renewals or addendums which shall include program specific metrics, evaluations, and recommendations for a continuous progress improvement process improvement process.
- (2A) email. Website, community gathering events, marketing via Website and in Community using the Campaigns and professionals detailed in UCD's Marketing Plan by High Velocity Marketing of Houston, Tx via emails, website, community gathering events, Volunteer and Board Development Projects and Events, via MOU with Eagles' Wings CDC for the Justice 40 Initiative from the US DOE, which includes the ability to leverage climate justice, fellowships and technical assistance and program funding , and Community Gathering & Appreciation Events.
- (2B) Increase BHPCC BIPOC Membership and participation of BIPOC community members, organizations, and neighborhood associations.
- (3A) **Weatherize 44 client homes @ \$550 each in Asheville/Buncombe County in FY 2024.** Train 10 as Climate Justice Ambassadors throughout Asheville and Buncombe County with funds which are leveraged from the Justice 40 Initiative and WNC Bridge Foundation grants.
- (4A) Conduct Metrics - **In accordance with US DOE's protocol – “ Whole Building with Consumption Analysis Evaluation Protocol which includes(i) Measures Installed(ii)Utility Data(iii) Blower Door test results if applicable(done on all electric homes by Jonathan Gach-(will execute subcontract with Mr. Gach who provides Blower Door testing (before and after weatherization installations) to Community Action Opportunities and is owner of Energy Home Inspection. He is the former Energy Upgrade Program Manager for the Blue Horizons Project, (iv) photos of projects and measures completed (v) field verification of at least 5% of all homes completed.**

Timeline

The contract will cover the period, July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

ATTACHMENT A: SCOPE OF WORK AND BUDGETARY COSTS

Contractor Shall:

Class Category	FY 24 Outputs	Cost/Separate Contracts	Total Cost
Contract Administration	(1A) Provide complete reporting including documentation. (1B) Check in with City/County Staff regularly to update on Weatherization quality/quantity initiatives, accomplishments and community engagement and membership. (1C) Provide reporting, administration, documentation, (client financial information, releases, photos, etc.) crew management, risk management/mitigation techniques and insurance as required, and project management throughout the duration of the contract, any renewals which shall include program-specific metrics, evaluation, and recommendations for a continuous progress improvement process. (1D) Reporting – Final Report, including Monthly/Quarterly Updates. 44 homes x\$40/hr.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing Costs paid by grant from WNC Bridge Foundation. 	
		\$ 880	\$ 1,760
UCD/EWCDC	(2A) Provide Marketing Support via Website and in Community using UCD's marketing Plan paid for by WNC Bridge Found, which includes community gathering events, Volunteer/Board Dev. Events, Justice 40 Promotions from DOE. (2B) Increase BIPOC Membership using skills transfer process/culturally competent evidenced based practices – BHPCC.	Paid for by WNC Bridge Foundation – \$50,000 Capacity-Building Grant – \$Website, (\$9,000 for Marketing Plan, and Monthly Marketing Activities -for 12 months – FY 2023-24.	\$ 0
UCD	(3A) Weatherize 44 client homes @\$550 ea.	\$12,100	\$24,200
	Blower Door Tests -all electric homes -30% of 44 homes @\$250 each	\$ 1,650	\$ 3,300
Total		\$14,630	\$ 29,260

Persons With Authority to Bind United Community Development of North Carolina. Questions – May also answer additional questions and provide clarification::

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