

**From:** Jackie Hamstead <Jackie.Hamstead@buncombecounty.org>  
**Subject:** FW: RFP Blue Horizons Project  
**To:** Bridget Herring <bherring@ashevillenc.gov>; Kiera Bulan <kbulan@ashevillenc.gov>  
**Cc:** Jeremiah P. LeRoy <Jeremiah.LeRoy@buncombecounty.org>  
**Sent:** June 12, 2023 4:42 PM (UTC-04:00)  
**Attached:** 2023 GBA RFP response for Blue Horizons Project.pdf, Community Engagement Plan (Version 6-12-23).docx.pdf, RFP Proposals GBA BHP 2023 Items.xlsx, Equity and inclusion plan for 100% renewable energy.docx, 2023 GBA RFP response for Blue Horizons Project.docx

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**From:** Ron Venturella <Ron.Venturella@buncombecounty.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 12, 2023 4:33 PM  
**To:** Jeremiah P. LeRoy <Jeremiah.LeRoy@buncombecounty.org>; Jackie Hamstead <Jackie.Hamstead@buncombecounty.org>  
**Subject:** FW: RFP Blue Horizons Project

Attached is the proposal from Green Built Alliance.



**Ron Venturella, MSAC, CLGPO**

he/his

Finance, Procurement Manager

**p. (828) 250-4154**

200 College St., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
PO Box 7526 - Asheville, NC 28802

*Respect. Honesty. Integrity. Collaboration. Equity.*

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**From:** Jamie Wine <[jamie@greenbuilt.org](mailto:jamie@greenbuilt.org)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 12, 2023 1:32 PM  
**To:** Ron Venturella <[Ron.Venturella@buncombecounty.org](mailto:Ron.Venturella@buncombecounty.org)>  
**Cc:** Sam Ruark <[sam@greenbuilt.org](mailto:sam@greenbuilt.org)>; Hannah Egan <[hannah@greenbuilt.org](mailto:hannah@greenbuilt.org)>; Summer Winkler <[summer@greenbuilt.org](mailto:summer@greenbuilt.org)>  
**Subject:** RFP Blue Horizons Project

Dear Ron Venturella,

Please see our proposal documents attached for the Blue Horizons Project RFP.

I'm including it in PDF format as well as Microsoft Word format, for your convenience, but it's the same document.

There are documents linked in the PDF to Google Drive. I'm including those files as well in case you cannot access them online.

Let me know if you have any questions, or need any additional information.

All the best,  
Jamie

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Jamie Wine  
Clean Energy Program Manager  
Green Built Alliance

828-254-1995 (o)

206-830-0015 (c)

Pronouns: He/Him/His <https://www.mypronouns.org/what-and-why>

PO Box 2594

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[www.bluehorizonsproject.com](http://www.bluehorizonsproject.com)

[www.greenbuilt.org](http://www.greenbuilt.org)

[jamie@greenbuilt.org](mailto:jamie@greenbuilt.org)

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Sign up to receive emergency texts directly from Buncombe County for breaking health and safety news. Text **BCALERT** on your smart phone to **99411** to receive alerts on important information such as floods, communicable disease, county office closings, and relevant traffic safety notifications OR visit [buncombeready.org](http://buncombeready.org)

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Asheville, NC 28801

June 12, 2023

Ron Venturella  
Buncombe County Procurement Department  
200 College Street, Suite 420  
Asheville, NC 28801

**RE: Buncombe County Request for Proposals, Blue Horizons Project, Section A: Cover Letter**

Blue Horizons Project Proposal Selection Committee:

Green Built Alliance is pleased to submit this proposal to continue administering and implementing Blue Horizons Project programming and facilitating the Blue Horizons Project Community Council.

Green Built Alliance was founded in 2001 to advance sustainable living, green building, and climate justice through community education, inspired action, and collaborative partnerships. This includes the successful implementation of programs such as the Blue Horizons Project, Energy Savers Network, Green Built Homes, Appalachian Offsets, and community outreach.

Green Built Alliance was a member of the Energy Innovation Task Force (EITF) since its inception in May 2016, and has successfully managed and executed the Blue Horizons Project since its launch in 2018. During that time, we have built collaborative relationships with the City of Asheville and Buncombe County, local nonprofits, neighborhood associations, businesses, and community members who are working towards a cleaner energy future for our county.

In the Blue Horizons Project's first five years, we have met and exceeded annual goals for energy-efficiency program participation and community engagement. Our strong team, subject matter expertise, proven track record in program implementation and matching fundraising are outlined in the following proposal. We look forward to continuing our bold approach to reaching 100% renewable energy adoption in the most equitable and collaborative way possible.

We thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The Staff and Board of Green Built Alliance



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Section B: Title Page

Green Built Alliance  
PO Box 2594  
Asheville, NC 28802 (mailing)

1 Haywood St STE 463  
Asheville, 28801 (physical)

Sam Ruark, Executive Director  
828-301-0774 (m)  
828-254-1995 (o)  
sam@greenbuilt.org  
www.greenbuilt.org



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RFP Response for Blue Horizons Project Management

Section **c) Describe the background, experience, and capabilities of your firm as it relates to the Scope of Work outlined in the RFP.**

### **Green Built Alliance Qualifications for BHP Implementation**

Since 2001, Green Built Alliance (GBA) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that has been advancing sustainability in the built environment through community education, measurable standards, and regional action. This includes the successful implementation of programs such as:

- Green Built Homes
- Appalachian Offsets
- Educational workshops for building professionals and the community
- Blue Horizons Project
- Energy Savers Network

These community-driven initiatives, equitably serving all people in Buncombe County and City of Asheville, have delivered results toward the City and County's renewable energy goals for over five years. This success has been possible through the expertise of our 11 staff members, diverse subcontractors, and our volunteer board. Since 2015, through this expertise, GBA has secured over \$1.25 million of matching support from private sources such as Dogwood Health Trust, Kendeda Foundation, Community Foundation WNC, Southeast Sustainability Directors Network, Bank of America and Duke Energy, as well as individual donations and event revenue to dramatically increase the impact of the public dollars awarded by the City and County.

### **Green Built Alliance Achievements (by initiative)**

#### Blue Horizons Project Community Council

Green Built Alliance staff has administered and supported The Blue Horizons Project (BHP) Community Council's work to reach 100% renewable energy in Buncombe County by 2042 since GBA was just a member in 2018, when the BHP was called the Energy Innovation Task Force. The BHP Community Council plays a pivotal leadership role in identifying community-led solutions and driving the renewable energy transition in Western North Carolina from a technology, community and equity focus.

Recommendations from the BHP Community Council have identified 3 key strategies to renewable energy adoption: electrify everything, green the grid and embrace efficiency. To achieve these aims,



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the BHP Community Council has directed GBA to do strong public outreach and written a collaborative, community-oriented plan to reach our shared 100% renewable goals. Funds for this portion of work were provided by The Kendeda Foundation.

Green Built Alliance's staff guides this body with administrative support and community organizing expertise. In return, the BHP Community Council provides community oversight and guidance to ensure the highest quality outcomes for the BHP's goals. Composed of diverse community representatives, the council serves as a unified voice advocating for clean energy initiatives and sustainability practices. GBA has successfully implemented previous BHP Community Council recommendations, including expanding energy efficiency programs, promoting community engagement, focusing on equity, exploring agrivoltaics, and certifying Green Built Homes.

In addition to direct service to low-income households, GBA has increased participation in Duke Peak Demand Response and Energy-Efficiency programs, resulting in tripling the number of Duke EnergyWise Home multifamily signups, doubling the number of Duke EnergyWise Home single family signups and growing program participation to a higher rate than any region served by Duke Energy Progress West according to the Duke Energy EM&V Report (2019).

#### Blue Horizons Project Community Outreach

At the guidance of the BHP Community Council, and funding from the City and County, GBA has conducted an expanded on-the-ground outreach campaign in FY23. Staff and volunteers have attended presentations or tabled at events to reach 52 groups and visibility to 40,055 event attendees. There were 1,224 individual conversations live, and in-person, on ways to save energy, improve sustainability, and install renewable energy, as well as dozens of sign ups for residential energy saving programs and referrals to partner agencies like Community Action Opportunities, Habitat for Humanity and Waste Reduction Partners.

Experts on the BHP Community Engagement Subcommittee, in partnership with GBA staff, have drafted a [new outreach plan for FY24](#) that GBA intends to implement as a core part of this proposal.

#### Blue Horizons Project Equity and Inclusion

The BHP Community Council and its subcommittees have been actively working on the strategic plan, including finalizing the first full draft and convening an Equity Taskforce to ensure diverse representation. Led by J Hackett, the [Equity Taskforce offered a report](#) that recommends we engage BIPOC communities in the renewable energy transition by conducting research, forming key partnerships, using culturally-appropriate messaging, hosting community events, providing resources, measuring impact, and continuously improving. For the Black community, we shall utilize social media, offer job training, involve Black leaders, and address equity concerns. It's a heavy lift, but incorporating this feedback into the FY24 community engagement plan and BHP Community Council efforts will be essential in FY24.



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### Energy Savers Network (ESN)

Expert staff members lead volunteers to weatherize low-income homes (both mobile homes and stick built) in Buncombe County and the City of Asheville to help increase equity to access in the 100% renewable energy transition. In addition to outreach to the general public, GBA staff have attended dozens of events at partner organizations like Manna Food Bank and Eblen Charities, to recruit participants in the ESN weatherization program.

Starting in March 2023, Duke Energy's low-income weatherization program, administered by TRC, began to allow additional resources for Tier 2 weatherization, heat pump upgrades, and refrigerator replacement. Staff have begun implementing these programs for ESN clients, but it's too soon to report direct outcomes for this program. Involvement and advocacy at the state-level Energy Efficiency Collaborative were conducted to reach this outcome through previous BHP funding.

Outcomes: ESN has provided approximately 2.1 gigawatt-hours (gWh) of savings across almost 1,000 households since 2017.

### Neighbor to Neighbor Solar

Neighbor to Neighbor empowers communities through the installation of solar systems on low-income family's homes, thus fostering renewable energy adoption and strengthening bonds among neighbors for a sustainable future. Through a competitive bid, local company Sugar Hollow Solar was selected and has since begun system installation.

Outcomes: Two rounds of programming, one in 2021 and one in the current fiscal year.

In 2021, 6 households received PV systems with an installed production of 24.85 kW, capable of 34,424 kWh of production annually.

In the second round, currently ongoing, since December 2022, we have installed 7 systems with 3.95 kW capacity, capable of over 35,000 kWh of annual production.

### Solarize Asheville-Buncombe 2021

Solarize Asheville-Buncombe was a community-driven initiative aimed at promoting and accelerating the adoption of solar energy in Buncombe County and the City of Asheville. It offered residents and businesses discounted pricing, streamlined processes, and access to reputable solar installers. The program included free site evaluations, quotes, and educational outreach to inspire widespread solar installations and create a more sustainable future. From the campaign in 2021, homeowners installed 182 systems that produce 2,009,732 kWh annually and an estimated \$251,215 in annual utility bill savings for homeowners.



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Community wide, the campaign added more than \$4.69 million in new clean energy development and eliminated as much as 2,689,753 lbs of CO2 annually from the local environment. This is equivalent to removing as many as 1,344 tons and 163 cars from local roadways for one year. Added battery/energy storage as a result of the campaign equaled 125 kWh.

Solarize Asheville-Buncombe was supported and led by a coalition of more than a dozen community members and organizations including Green Built Alliance, Blue Horizons Project, City of Asheville, Buncombe County, the Center for Biological Diversity, Sierra Club, Umoja, Hood Huggers, Asheville Homestay Network, Lenoir-Rhyne University, MountainTrue, The Collider, and administered by Solar Crowdsourcing. This proposal includes a new round of Solarize in Asheville-Buncombe to be conducted in FY24.

#### GBA Reporting to City and County staff

GBA staff have provided all necessary materials to the City and County for payment of the quarterly invoices. In each year of our previous contracts we have come in at or under budget for the scope of work delivery. There have been some minor pivots to the scope of work over the years and we appreciate the collaboration of City and County staff of ensuring that any changes made reflect the purpose of the grant.





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**Green Built Alliance Values:**

- Sustainability
- Inclusiveness and equity
- Financial responsibility
- Community collaboration
- Supporting staff, contractors and volunteers to be healthy and happy
- Using best practices in building science, energy efficiency, and renewable energy
- Helping people and the planet to adapt to change and build skillful resilience

**Green Built Alliance Board of Directors:**

Green Built Alliance is on solid financial footing and benefits from the leadership of a great staff team and Board of Directors. The GBA Board provides strategic guidance and oversight of our nonprofit, charitable purpose.

The 13-member Green Built Alliance Board of Directors is composed of professionals representing a diverse range of backgrounds in building trades, nonprofit and environmental organizations. In the past five years, we have diversified the board in terms of race, gender, and professional background.

The list of board and staff can be found here: <https://www.greenbuilt.org/about/board-staff/>

**Green Built Alliance Staff and Team:**

Sam Ruark, Executive Director

Sam has been working in the field of sustainability and clean energy for 25 years. In his seven years as Executive Director, Green Built Alliance has grown in its scope and impact. In the past five years, we have successfully implemented the Blue Horizons Project; completed energy-efficiency upgrades for more than 1,000 homes; raised \$450,000 for the Isaac Dickson Elementary School solar system; educated more than 4,000 building professionals and members of the public; certified more than 600 Green Built Homes; and produced events, directories, and a comprehensive and well-used website.

Earlier in his career, Sam assisted the County of Marin and County of Sonoma in California in developing, managing and implementing energy-efficiency and solar-energy programs through



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the Planning Department in Marin and the General Services Department in Sonoma. This work included participating in the development of Community Choice Aggregation in both counties, which allowed the local governments to choose from whom they purchased electricity, providing for greater use of renewables. He also was project lead on a 700-kW photovoltaic system installation, oversaw the creation of two clean-energy ordinances, and provided education to staff, building professionals, and the public on the value and how-to of green building.

He has managed several large grants from the US Department of Energy, Pacific Gas & Electric, and Southeast Sustainability Directors Network, and smaller grants or projects from Z Smith Reynolds Foundation, Duke Energy, the Kendeda Fund, and the Community Foundation of WNC.

Sam serves on the statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative with Duke Energy and state leaders on clean energy. This connection has opened the opportunity to be a contractor with Duke Energy for Fee For service and the Helping Home Fund.

Sam's Role in BHP:

- Bring forth ideas for BHPCC to consider
- Support and direct staff in implementing and evaluating strategies developed at the BHPCC
- Directing and coaching BHP staff to ensure all deliverables are being met
- Creating contracts for subcontractors
- Liaison with City and County staff and elected officials to ensure their ideas are being considered and incorporated
- Set fundraising goals and lead grant applications

Jamie Wine, Clean Energy Program Manager

Jamie is the manager of day-to-day activities in the Energy Savers Network and Blue Horizons Project programs at Green Built Alliance. Jamie joined Green Built Alliance in the spring of 2022. He hails most recently from New Orleans where he was the executive director at an education and outreach nonprofit for energy efficiency and building science across Louisiana. Before that, in Seattle, California and Boston, as a staff leader, he developed nonprofit programs for varied audiences like students in grades K-12, ocean advocates, traffic engineers, community organizers, adults, families and youth.

Jamie is deeply committed to community empowerment through education, fighting the climate crisis, and bringing environmental justice to disadvantaged communities. While an executive decision is often easier, he believes a collaborative approach yields a more satisfying result. Working with the BHP Community Council to achieve collaborative success has been rewarding



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and productive for him and the team.

Jamie received a dual major bachelors degree in science in marine biology and environmental studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and holds professional certifications in building performance, leadership development, public speaking and real estate.

#### Jamie's Role in BHP:

Manage program goals and objectives to achieve funder and BHP Community Council goals for reaching 100% renewable energy by 2042.

- Blue Horizons Project Community Council (BHPCC) Management
- Primary staff point of contact for all BHP Community Council activities. Coordinate with City, County and GBA staff as well as BHP Community Council Members, Chair and Vice-Chair to determine objectives, run meetings and convene subcommittees.
  - Providing updates to the Blue Horizons Project Community Council on activities, deliverables, and results.
  - Coordinate BHPCC members and support their engagement in programs, working groups, and advocacy at state legislature and North Carolina Utilities Commission.
- Managing and mentoring staff working on BHP and ESN programs.
- Primary fundraiser to small foundations for program leverage.
- Securing additional support from Duke Energy for program participants:
  - Coordinate with Duke's Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative.
  - Promote Duke Energy's residential energy efficiency efforts to increase participation in Duke Energy Progress Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy programs: Energy Wise Home and Business, Home Energy House Call and Smart \$aver.
- Providing public training and presentations on energy efficiency.

#### Summer Winkler, Clean Energy Program Coordinator

Summer joined Green Built Alliance in the summer of 2021 as an intern and was hired to work on staff in the spring of 2022. She grew up in Western North Carolina and after a few years in New York City and Raleigh, she is thrilled to call these mountains home again.

She graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2016 with a degree in global studies, focusing on health and environment. Summer's foray into sustainability grew in her personal life with the zero-waste movement and a cross-country road trip where she spent several



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months camping, spending time in nature, and learning how different cities approached sustainability and had access to it. She then received a Graduate Certificate of Sustainability from Virginia Tech.

#### Summer's Role in BHP:

- Primary organizer for the Community Engagement Plan.
  - Organizing and attending community and neighborhood events that promote energy-efficiency programs.
  - Coordinating media, social media, and community engagement for the project.
  - Providing content and updates to the Blue Horizons Project website.
  - Newsletter author and coordination.
- Communications coordination for BHP and ESN
  - Coordinating overall Marketing Plan for Clean Energy programming.
  - Energy Savers Network social media and newsletter coordination.
  - Promotion of Home Energy Chats through marketing materials and advertising.
- Neighbor to Neighbor coordination, including screening candidates and interfacing with the solar installation contractor (currently Sugar Hollow Solar).
- Supporting BHPCC and subcommittees by convening meetings, taking notes and acting as a link between all subcommittees.
- Coordinating BHP financially supportive events, like the Earth Day 5k.
- Supporting summer pre-apprenticeship program

#### Kelvin Bonilla, Energy Savers Network Manager

Kelvin Bonilla, a native of Honduras, brings more than a decade of experience in the building performance industry to the Energy Savers Network team.

He started his career with Green Opportunities, gaining vast experience in the field as a crew leader, mentor, and instructor in the classroom. He went on to work with Conservation Pros, a small locally owned building performance company. Some of the highlights of his career include teaching more than 300 community members Building Performance Institute standards; instructing City of Asheville employees on building science best practices; and performing weatherization on Asheville's Red Cross and countless homes, including 1,200 units for the Housing Authority of the City of Asheville. He has worked in partnerships with local nonprofits such as Community Action Opportunities and the Neighbors Saves program. Kelvin became an OSHA instructor, teaching workplace safety and employee rights at construction and manufacturing companies throughout the southeast.



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Kelvin has multiple professional certifications including BPI, HERS, Lead Safe Renovator, Class III Asbestos Worker, CPR instructor, and OSHA-30.

In his work with the Energy Savers Network, Kelvin wants to continue his passion of reducing the energy consumption of homes in marginalized communities, which are often the most affected by climate change. He is truly passionate about building performance and applying triple-bottom-line principles to help affect positive change for the people in our local community who need it the most.

Kelvin's role in Energy Savers Network:

- Managing energy-efficiency upgrades for low-income households, including:
  - Performing blower-door tests
  - Providing clients with energy-conservation strategies specific to their home
  - Materials handling (e.g. purchasing, storage, tracking, etc.)
  - Team lead for workdays
- Community engagement and program promotion (e.g. community presentations, partnership building, implementation of Duke's Fee For Service, Duke's Helping Home Fund, etc.)
- Manage client services for Spanish-speaking households.
- Offering technical training for staff, subcontractors, and volunteers
- Assisting with client outreach and educational workshops
- Handling project verification for subcontractors
- Referring clients to other service providers such as Community Action Opportunities, Mountain Housing Opportunities, Council on Aging, ABCCM, food banks such as Manna, Eblen Charities, etc.
- Project and client database management
- Managing the summer pre-apprenticeship program

Steffi Rausch, Volunteer and Web Coordinator

Steffi joined Green Built Alliance in early 2021. She brings 23 years of experience as a self-employed web designer and seven years of climate advocacy volunteer work as a chapter leader for Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL). While she still advocates for a bipartisan federal climate policy with CCL in her spare time as a volunteer, she is excited to transition her full-time work to serving her local community in ways that help sustain a livable planet by reducing our carbon emissions. She finds the two opportunities with her career and volunteer work, to serve and protect



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the most vulnerable of society while protecting the planet, to be extremely rewarding and a way to grow her compassion towards others.

Steffi's role in Energy Savers Network:

- Volunteer recruitment, engagement, and retention
- Develop, promote, and maintain a wide range of volunteer opportunities within the organization (e.g. client recruitment volunteers, weatherization volunteers, client satisfaction outreach volunteers, storm windows workshop volunteers, team lead volunteers, etc.).
- Develop and manage client and volunteer policies, procedures, and standards of volunteer service
- Organize and participate in volunteer-recognition programs and special events.
- Maintain accurate records and provide timely statistical and activity reports on the operations.

Hannah Egan, Outreach and Resource Manager

Hannah Egan joined Green Built Alliance in early 2018 as an intern and transitioned to work on staff later that year. She is now a leader at GBA in reporting in the nonprofit sector, green building, and energy efficiency. Hannah graduated from Appalachian State University in 2012 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Sustainable Development concentrated in Community, Regional, and Global Development. Hannah's role is critical in connecting BHP and ESN work with the myriad funding sources and reporting that is required to support the work.

Originally from just outside Baltimore, Hannah moved to New Zealand after college and then back home to Maryland before returning to the Blue Ridge Mountains. She is excited to apply her skills and education to an organization that is dedicated to creating a better built environment for the entire community.

Hannah's Role in BHP:

- Operations management:
  - Client tracking in our Salesforce database
  - Collecting and analyzing program data to report back to funders.
  - Managing funders' needs to meet client and weatherization objectives.
  - Internal quality control for weatherization programs.
  - Coordination with Duke Energy to collect outcome data.
  - Strategic visioning with ESN staff to responsibly grow program impact by leveraging various funding sources.
  - Submit client and project information to Duke Energy for Fee for Service



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rebates

- Coordinate with subcontractors for HVAC install and safety improvements available through matching grants such as ARPA.

#### Mikal Bonilla, Energy Savers Network Crew Leader

Originally a volunteer for Energy Savers Network, Mikal joined Green Built Alliance's staff in the spring of 2022. A native of beautiful North Carolina, Mikal has had a deep love and appreciation for Mother Earth instilled in her since childhood. This, coupled with Mikal's compassion and lifelong desire to help others, made a career with Green Built Alliance of particular interest for her.

Born in the Piedmont Triad with roots in Eastern North Carolina, Mikal has called these mountains home since 2016. Offering a varied set of skills and experience, some of her most proud accomplishments include her time working with FEMA after the tragic hurricanes Irma and Maria; her time spent exploring the "strange and unknown" for FATE magazine; and most recently, dedicating many weeks to the county-wide efforts to provide the COVID-19 vaccine to Western North Carolina with the Buncombe County Health Department in 2021.

#### Mikal's Role in Energy Savers Network

- ESN weatherization client recruitment, scheduling, and followup.
- Lead workdays at client homes.
- Volunteer management and appreciation.
- Coordinating the summer pre-apprenticeship program.
- Managing materials use and recycling for ESN.

#### Amber Gilot, Human Resources and Finance Manager

Amber joined Green Built Alliance in early 2021. Born and raised in the mountains of Western North Carolina, these mountains, valleys and rivers are part of Amber's blood.

Her passion and drive for doing work that matters began while at Warren Wilson College, a service-oriented work-college nestled in the rolling hills of Swannanoa, NC. This passion stayed with her as she began her professional career in Asheville. She now has more than 12 years of experience using organizational management, bookkeeping and writing for businesses who are focused on a triple bottom line and local community and environmental matters. Amber is passionate about working with organizations, businesses and people who care about more than just the bottom line. Social, environmental and economic justice and issues of the soul and heart are at the core of who she works with.

Amber does the bookkeeping for all GBA activities and supports Human Resources needs.



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#### Energy Savers Network (ESN) and Volunteers

Energy Savers Network (ESN) mobilizes volunteers to provide energy upgrades, energy education, and assessments to low-income families in Buncombe County. ESN is supported by 30 - 40 key volunteers who support the workdays and events.

#### 2013 Ford Transit Connect Vans

GBA continues to use two branded, wrapped Ford Transit Connect Vans to transport materials, a blower door, and project team to our clients' homes. These vehicles allow us to minimize personal vehicle use and have a nicely organized place to store, restock and transport supplies for our weatherization projects. This new resource was made possible by individual donations by ESN supporters, including core ESN volunteers.





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## Scope of Services

Green Built Alliance will be the major implementer of the scope of services including:

Action	Staff dedicated to this action	Percentage of task
Engagement with Duke Energy Progress	Sam and Jamie	Sam: 40%; Jamie: 60%
Residential engagement and program promotions	Jamie and Summer	Jamie: 40%; Summer: 60%
Business engagement and program promotions	Jamie and Summer	Jamie: 50%; Summer: 50%
Energy-efficiency and weatherization resources to low-income residents	Kelvin, Hannah, and Mikal with support from Sam & Volunteers	Mikal: 40%, Kelvin: 40%, Hannah: 15%; Sam: 5%
Promotion of BHP and renewable-energy goals through education and community engagement	Jamie and Summer	Jamie: 50%; Summer: 50%
2024 Solarize Campaign	Summer and Jamie	Summer: 60%; Jamie 40%
100% Renewables Plan Implementation	BHPCC, Sam, Jamie, Summer	Sam: 10%; Jamie: 50%; Summer: 40%
Facilitate and manage the BHP Community Council	Jamie with support from Summer	Jamie: 70%; Summer: 30%
Liaise between BHPCC, BHP staff, and City and County	Sam and Jamie	Jamie: 80%; Sam: 20%



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### **Scope of Work: Summary**

Blue Horizons Project aims to achieve a community-wide transition to 100% renewable energy by 2042 through community engagement, programming, and collaboration with Buncombe County and the City of Asheville.

The primary deliverable is the implementation of the Blue Horizons Project and management of its advisory board, the Blue Horizons Project Community Council. This includes administering the low-income weatherization program called Energy Savers Network.

Priority programs include residential weatherization initiatives, educational programming for contractors, and a solar energy group purchase campaign (aka, “Solarize”).

Support services involve providing administrative and campaign support, securing additional funding, and conducting program impact analysis.

Data analysis will inform program modifications, track progress, and measure metrics such as clients served, program participation, cost savings, energy reductions, and carbon impact.

### **Scope of Work: Detailed**

#### Blue Horizons Project Community Council

Cost to County and City: \$30,000

Green Built Alliance staff will continue to administer The Blue Horizons Project Community Council to deliver on the three key priorities in reaching 100% renewable energy county-wide by 2042: green the grid, electrify everything and embrace efficiency. Guidance from the Community Council, its subcommittees, and our equity subcontractor indicated this work will heavily focus on conducting quality live and remote meetings, support services for volunteer board members, and implementation of their recommendations for technology adoption, community engagement and equity-focused outreach. These tactics and activities include:

- Organization and support of monthly meetings for each body
  - Full Community Council
  - Subcommittees as existing and newly created
  - City & County Staff coordination meeting



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- BHP Community Council leader coordination meeting
- Supporting other organizations and the BHP Community Council in implementing the new 100% Renewable Energy Plan.
  - Catalyzing BHP Council Members and other organizations like Land of Sky Regional Council, Waste Reduction Partners Duke Energy, Local HVAC contractors, Solar energy installers as well as those yet to be identified, to directly address community energy needs beyond the resources of GBA.
- Implementing [Equity and Inclusion Taskforce Plan](#) with an emphasis on personal, direct connections and interactions to bring new members into the leadership structure of BHP Community Council.
  - Conduct ongoing research: Conduct research on the target communities, utilizing focus groups and community interviews as primary sources of information.
  - Develop key partnerships: Form partnerships with organizations and individuals within the diverse communities to gain trust and access hard-to-reach populations.
  - Create culturally-appropriate messaging: Tailor messaging to resonate with the diverse communities, considering language, cultural values, and energy needs.
  - Host community events: Organize educational events, workshops, and demonstrations to raise awareness about renewable energy, involving community members in the planning process.
  - Provide resources: Offer information on financing options, installation assistance, and energy-saving tips to support community members in transitioning to renewable energy.
  - Measure impact: Track community engagement, renewable energy installations, and energy savings to evaluate the effectiveness of outreach efforts.
  - Continuously improve: Regularly assess and improve outreach strategies to ensure they remain relevant and effective for engaging diverse communities.
- Implementing the Community Engagement Plan (detail below).
- Using existing, publicly available resources, GBA will report data to the BHP Community Council establishing a to-date baseline energy accomplishments and ongoing progress updates toward the 100% renewable goal through an on-agenda dashboard.

#### Blue Horizons Project Community Outreach

Cost to County and City: \$ 61,800

Experts on the BHP Community Engagement Subcommittee, in partnership with GBA staff, have collaboratively drafted a [new outreach plan for FY24](#). This plan was scheduled to be adopted at the July 2023 BHP Community Council meeting. However, this iterative process will likely take a little longer for the BHP Community Council to finalize and adopt. However, based on the current plan consensus, GBA intends to implement this plan as a core part of our work under this proposal.

- Phase I involves updating the BHP video, BHP website, improving the logo, promoting news



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through various media platforms, and running local advertisements.

- Phase II includes a community climate challenge, hosting climate action-focused events, conducting an environmental justice survey, and participating in community outreach.
- A core element in all the objectives is including the findings from the Equity Taskforce in implementing the outreach plan.
- Utilize social media and digital media platforms to increase engagement, share clean energy projects, provide home energy advice, and promote resources.
- Performance will be tracked using key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate and adjust initiatives on a semi-annual basis.

The plan also relies on our existing partnerships in the community with other nonprofits and our own member companies to help spread the word about BHP's work and how to reach the 100% renewable energy goals by 2042.

#### Energy Savers Network (ESN) Weatherization

Total Cost: \$180,000

Cost to County and City: \$130,000

Matching Funds: \$50,000

With 18,000 mobile homes and 40,000 people living below the poverty line in Buncombe County, there are many people who need this support. By addressing the pressing problems of lower-income housing affordability and economic inequality, funding weatherization at an expanded level would be an efficient way for Buncombe County to make its first major effort toward achieving community-wide goals of 100 percent renewable energy by 2042 for the community. At a target rate of 600 homes per year, we could make a substantial dent in improving the efficiency of low-income homes by 2042. We aim for 200 homes per year in this contract and continue to seek resources to expand this programming.

At a total cost per home of \$850, with \$600 per home coming from this contract, expert staff members will lead volunteers to weatherize low-income homes (both mobile homes and stick built) in Buncombe County and the City of Asheville to help increase equity access in the 100% renewable energy transition. Outreach to Spanish speaking communities has been a cornerstone of our programs in FY23, with 22% of households being members of this group. We will use lessons learned so far, and [the equity outreach plan](#), to reach additional BIPOC communities more effectively.

Our outreach to diverse communities has improved over the years, and in FY23 we served mostly non-white households for the first time. Clients self-identify their race in a follow up survey. These are the demographics of our clients in ESN since program inception compared the current program year::



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	<b><u>Cumulative (FY18 - FY23)</u></b>	<b><u>FY23 Only</u></b>
<b>White</b>	53%	29%
<b>Black</b>	24%	18%
<b>Latine</b>	22%	47%
<b>Native American</b>	0%	0.5%
<b>Multiracial</b>	0%	3%
<b>Other</b>	1.5%	1%

Additional outreach to find qualified clients comes from Eblen Charities (distributors of LIHEAP funds), MANNA food bank, community events and most successfully, via word of mouth.

Measurement and verification (M&V) for this program, will be conducted in partnership with Vandemusser Design PLLC, with whom we have been working with for three years. Reporting will provide impact and energy savings data analysis. From these annual reports, we will utilize that data to inform program modifications and recommendations for continuous improvement. Tracked metrics will include client cost savings, energy reductions, and carbon impact among others. In addition, we will track internally with our Salesforce database, number of clients served and increases in program participation.

Matching funds come from a Dogwood Health Trust Grant and Duke Energy incentives.

We work extensively with Mountain Housing Opportunities, Habitat for Humanity and Community Action Opportunities through client referrals and regular check-in meetings to be sure we're serving the community as efficiently and effectively as possible.

**Energy Savers Network (ESN) - Home Repair and Heating repair and replacement**

Total Cost (estimated): \$305,000

Total Cost to County and City: \$0

Matching Funds: \$305,000

Clients will receive weatherization and home improvement services available through funding sources secured separately by GBA. These include:

\$165,000 - Home safety repair and upgrades for improvements like leaky roofs, unsafe



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stairs and guardrails, holes in drywall, bathroom safety improvements and smoke/CO detectors. This program is underwritten by Duke's Health Homes program and the Dogwood Health Trust. Repairs are performed by Tony Berskins and United Community Development.

\$80,000 - Through fee-for-service reimbursement, the team will utilize Tier 2 Duke Energy Weatherization for Low Income Families funding from the utility. Home improvements can include similar items as Dogwood, but also HVAC improvements and tier 2 improvements like insulation and additional air sealing for attic and crawl spaces.

\$100,000 - ARPA HVAC repair and replacement funds are available to replace systems that are not working or to do fuel switching from fossil fuels to electric heat pump systems.

Managing these myriad funding sources in a coherent and single-source way with our clients, helps low-income households access much needed resources. ESN is a conduit for low-income families to save money, live healthier and be more comfortable in their own homes, not just through energy efficiency, but through these additional, GBA-administered programs.

#### Neighbor to Neighbor Solar

Total Cost (estimated): \$250,000

Total Cost to County and City from this proposal: \$0

Matching Funds: \$250,000 (ARPA City and County)

Through City and County ARPA allocations, 20 eligible low income households will receive a no-cost, rooftop solar system. Slated for 13 additional systems through December 2024. We also continue to fundraise for this effort with our own events and donors and have secured an additional \$13,000 toward this program to-date.

#### Solarize Asheville-Buncombe 2024 with Solar Crowdsourcing

Total Cost (estimated): \$10,000

Total Cost to County and City: \$10,000

Matching Funds: 5% of solar installation costs goes to Solar Crowdsourcing, about \$250,000 in 2021.

GBA staff will coordinate outreach, logistics and support to recruit and publicize a new Solarize Campaign. By engaging with Solar Crowdsourcing again in 2024, GBA will be able to use a proven model to facilitate a community-based group purchase program (i.e. Solarize), which will help reduce the cost of solar and make clean, sustainable energy more available to community residents. The Solar Crowdsourcing platform offers a range of tools, features and educational programming that add capacity for community organizers employing Solarize programs to meet clean-energy and equity goals that are easily accessible, and help remove previous barriers to obtaining and investing in solar energy — all at no expense to the community. We will do our best to evolve the model from 2021 to include local solar installers.



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#### Trades Education and Outreach - GBA Continuing Education

GBA already offers continuing education for contractors. This year, we hope to add additional classes that will give tradespeople knowledge about energy-saving technology so they can promote innovative energy-efficient appliances to their customers, improve access to rebate opportunities, and strengthen the contractor network for future initiatives.

We would have 6 classes about building science and in all of them there will be elements of using that information to access utility and IRA incentives for their businesses. One will specifically be about net-zero energy buildings, another about solar energy in buildings. We could also add 1 or 2 new classes, one for HVAC contractors on benefits of specification of high SEER and HSPF equipment and one on best practices for installing heat pump water heaters (we still need to identify instructors for these last two class options).

#### State-level advocacy Duke EE Collaborative

Being engaged as a participant in this group in FY23 directly led to starting Duke Energy Progress Weatherization tier 2 programming for low-income households. We wish to continue this work, as it could lead to additional resources for Buncombe County residents.

#### Pilot Purchase Campaign - Heat Pump Water Heaters

The Solarize campaign in 2021 served as a successful model for a potential heat pump water heater replacement program, however, we believe it would take \$70k per year to hire a staff member for this program to be successful. Such a program was proposed and championed by members of the BHP Community Council. It would aim to boost the use of heat pump water heaters in the community, reduce prices through bulk purchasing and tax credits, and contribute to the community's renewable energy goals. The program will be launched in 2024, and milestones include hiring a coordinator, forming an advisory group, identifying installation companies, securing bulk discounts, marketing the campaign, tracking adoption and energy savings, and ensuring long-term sustainability. **GBA continues to seek funding for this program, but it is not yet secured.** One potential funding pathway is the DOE Energy Future's grant. If we secure funding, it would be matching resources to this contract.

**d) Identify all subcontractors you intend to use for the proposed scope of work. For each subcontractor listed, proposers shall indicate 1.) What products and/or services are to be supplied by that subcontractor; 2) What experience the subcontractor has in working for communities from underserved populations and; 3.) What percentage of the overall scope of work that subcontractor will perform.**



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Green Built Alliance only intends to partner with one subcontractor at this time:

Vandemusser Design PLLC

Vandemusser Design PLLC will be contracted for the measurement and verification of the Energy Savers Network Program, as has been completed in previous years. Headquartered in Asheville, NC, VandeMusser Design provides technical consulting and certification services for green residential construction to builders, architects, developers, and homeowners in Western North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia. This is the 4th report they will be producing for the program. At last year's price of \$12,000, this is 6 percent of the total contract.

Partnership and collaboration are going to be critical to our success. We intend to partner, or continue to partner, with the following organizations. These are not direct subcontractors, but they are critical multipliers to the work of this contract with the City and County.

Solar CrowdSource:

Solar Crowdsourcing is a platform that facilitates community-based group purchase programs (i.e. Solarize programs) that help reduce the cost of solar and make clean, sustainable energy more available to community residents. The Solar Crowdsourcing platform offers a range of tools, features and educational programming that add capacity for community organizers employing Solarize programs to meet clean-energy and equity goals that are easily accessible, and help remove previous barriers to obtaining and investing in solar energy — all at no expense to the community. Solar Crowdsourcing was the partner in the previous Solarize campaign.

United Community Development: UCD is well equipped to provide home repair services in our wrap-around programming for clients. We will hire UCD annually to provide safety, health and comfort improvements at client households, and help recruit additional families to the program. They will handle client recruitment, material purchasing and management, and project verification. While this is not directly awarded through this contract, these wrap-around services are offered to our clients as part of ESN messaging. This work is funded by the Dogwood Health Trust.

Referral Network

While not technically subcontractors, we have relationships with several companies and organizations where we refer our clients.

Low-income Weatherization:

- Community Action Opportunities for deeper retrofits





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Home Repair:

- Mountain Housing Opportunities
- Council on Aging
- Habitat for Humanity

Moderate to High-income Energy Efficiency:

- Duke Energy programs such as Energy Wise Home, Home Energy House Call, and Smart Savers.
- Conservation Pros and EnergySmith Home Performance are two local companies specializing in air sealing and insulation.

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HVAC installers and contractors who specialize in efficient HVAC systems and who are approved as Duke Energy Trade Allies which allows clients to obtain Smart Saver rebates

Commercial Energy Efficiency:

- Land of Sky Waste Reduction Partners for commercial and nonprofit energy audits
- Duke Energy Small Business Smart Saver, Alesha Reardon, one of our board members, works in this program, which makes connections and referrals simple.

Solar Energy Companies:

There are many local installers who have years of experience doing residential and commercial solar and battery systems and who will be integral to the process of adopting 100% renewable energy.

We receive client referrals from the following organizations:

- Eblen Charities
- Buncombe County Community Engagement
- Homeward Bound
- Council on Aging

**Section E) List at least 3 client references public and/or private of similar size for whom you have provided services in the past three years. Provide telephone numbers and contact names for references.**

Michelle Myers

Chair of the Blue Horizons Community Council



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Keith Bamberger

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Certified Environmental Educator  
Energy Manager  
Information and Communication Specialist  
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North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality

J Hackett

Reverend and former ED of Green Opportunities. Owner of The Grind coffee shop  
hackett2k@gmail.com  
(828) 785-0233

We also are providing letters and quotes from clients and volunteers below:

**ESN Weatherization Testimonials**

“Energy savers network came out and helped weatherize our home, and we couldn’t be happier with the work they did. Everyone was kind and helpful. It’s incredible knowing that this service exists and I would highly recommend it to anyone needing help improving energy efficiency in their home.” -Jesse laquinto

“The master bedroom would get extremely warm when running the heat and the back of the home stayed cold! None of the rooms got warm... After the Energy Savers Network came by and did quite some work, I now have heat all throughout my home! So thankful especially for my children!”  
-Dionna Staley

**Dogwood Health Trust Home Repair Testimonial**

“I would like to thank everyone involved in this program. I am so grateful for Green Built and Energy Savers. Tony was so nice and knowledgeable about my porch. He answered all my questions without hesitation. He assisted me with some siding I asked him about. Being a single mom with a single mom income I am so grateful to know there are some nice people in the world willing to help. Tony, thank you for such a great job and personality.” -Rolanda Roberts



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### ESN Volunteer Testimonial

“We just get better and better at doing our job together. Everybody works to help each other on this crew whether you’re a paid leader or volunteer like I am. It feels really good to give back and see immediate results. I stay on week after week because it’s great working with committed people. We teach each other and get better. We’re starting another year. Last year in 2022 I worked on 29 homes. It feels great!” -Lew Gelfond, has completed over 500 volunteer hours

### Section F) Provide specific costs for each service proposed

Our total proposal request to the County and City is \$233,800 per year. Costs for materials and labor continue to rise due to inflation and the need to retain high quality staff. We will continue to fundraise to meet the gap, as evinced in leveraged resources below. And additional funding from this contract (beyond what the costs have been for the past three years) will be essential in implementing the scope outlined in the RFP.

The tables below are excerpts from the [projection spreadsheet available on Google Drive](#).

This table provides requested funding for each main program for FY 24.

	Direct Funding Request	Secured leveraged resources	Other Source
<b>Residential weatherization initiatives</b>			
ESN Weatherization Services (200 homes at \$850/home)	\$120,000	\$50,000	Dogwood Health Trust
Program Evaluation	\$12,000		
<u>Leveraged programs</u>			
Home repairs for health and safety		\$100,000	Dogwood Health Trust
Other home repairs		\$35,000	Duke Energy Helping Home Fund
Tier 1 and 2 weatherization (insulation, duct sealing, etc)		\$60,000	Duke Energy Weatherization Program



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Heating system replacement & Neighbor to Neighbor Solar Installs		\$180,000	City (2026) and County (2025) ARPA \$500k total
Apprenticeship program		\$20,000	*Unsecured funding
<b>Blue Horizons Project Community Council Coordination</b>	\$30,000		
<b>Community Engagement Program</b>	\$63,800		
<b>Educational programming for local contractors</b>		\$10,000	GBA unrestricted funds
<b>Pilot group purchase campaign: Solarize</b>	\$10,000		
<u>Leveraged programs</u>			
Heat pump water heater crowdsource program [not secured]		\$70,000	*Unsecured - Unidentified/DOE Energy Futures
<b>Total Funds Needed</b>	<b>\$235,800</b>	<b>\$525,000</b>	<b>\$760,800</b>

### Three year budget projections:

\*\*Bold indicates our direct funding request in this proposal

	<b>PY24</b>	<b>PY25</b>	<b>PY26</b>
<b>ESN Weatherization Services (200 homes at \$850/home)</b>	\$170,000	\$255,000	\$340,000
<b>Program Evaluation</b>	\$12,000	\$13,000	\$14,000
<u>Wrap Around Services for ESN Clients (leveraged dollars)</u>			
Home repairs for health and safety (Dogwood)	\$100,000	\$100,000	
Other home repairs (Duke Healthy Homes)	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
Duke Tier 1 and 2 weatherization (insulation, duct sealing, etc)	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
Heating system replacement & Neighbor to Neighbor Solar Installs	\$180,000	\$160,000	\$160,000
Apprenticeship program	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000



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Blue Horizons Project Community Council Coordination	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$40,000
<b>Community Engagement Program</b>	<b>\$63,800</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>
<b>Educational programming for local contractors</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Pilot group purchase campaign: Solarize</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>		
<b>Heat pump water heater crowdsource program [not secured]</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	
<b>Total Funds Needed</b>	<b>\$760,800</b>	<b>\$833,000</b>	<b>\$759,000</b>

### Program Budget Overview:

Community Engagement Program, [based on the plan](#) drafted with the BHPCC Community Engagement Committee.

Task	Estimated Cost	Notes
Create a 30-second version of an updated BHP video to replace the 3:30-min version on the website by the end of 2023.	\$ 3,000.00	Outside hire
Upgrades to BHP website layout, design, content (including automated customer journey directing them to appropriate resources)	\$ 2,000.00	
Because BHP is a Green Built Alliance program, work with a local graphic designer to update and better align the BHP logo with GBA branding by adding a leaf (on or near the sun) and possibly adding similar colors by the end of 2023.	\$ 1,500.00	Outside hire
When there is news to share, promote it on the BHP website, through BHP's digital media platforms and directly to local media outlets and key reporters to garner media interviews and secure earned media coverage. Also create a running list of partner organizations and individuals that engage with diverse	\$ 750.00	Assuming 10 accounts of earned media



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communities and promote news and events through their existing channels.		
Run at least 1 local print ad and 1 local radio ad semi-annually to showcase equitable, clean energy progress in the region and promote the community climate challenge and/or countywide event (see below).	\$ 2,000.00	\$500 per ad
Lead and manage a month long, peer-to-peer community climate challenge, where people sign up to track and submit their climate-friendly actions on a weekly basis.		Staff time
With partners who share similar goals and objectives, plan and host – or co-host – at least 1 annual climate action-focused, countywide event that could include: Prominent speakers, such as elected officials from the City and County, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community leaders, etc., including a live Q&A. Expo booth showcasing a diverse array of private and public entities working to advance a just, clean energy future. Award ceremony recognizing the top, most impactful local clean energy projects and companies of the year. Eco-friendly prize raffle for residents who actively participated in the community climate challenge. Live music from a well-known local band.	\$ 12,000.00	Estimated first year event cost based on Earth Day 5K expenses (cash & staff time)
Engage the equity focus group to conduct research and interviews with communities missing from previous engagement strategies.		Staff time to manage group or contractor hire. Equity stipend (child care, flat payment, etc) for group members



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Conduct an annual environmental justice survey to better understand the unique needs and challenges of communities experiencing disproportionate environmental harms and risks. Promote survey findings within vulnerable communities to educate and engage residents in programs that help lower the energy burden, such as GBA's Energy Savers Network.		Staff time (+ survey software cost?)
Participate in and conduct outreach at least 10 relevant, local community events, speaking engagements, festivals, fairs, farmer's markets, and other forums per quarter, including BHP presentations to community groups, churches, non-profit organizations, and businesses. Ensure Community Council members represent BHP by attending at least one GBA event per year. Engage community members in the planning process to help ensure events are relevant and effective.	\$ 6,000.00	\$600 per event
Social Media: Increase engagement with BHP's digital media platforms by 5% quarterly, from a July 1, 2022, baseline, for a 20% cumulative increase across all platforms annually by: Cast a wide net to reach Buncombe County and Asheville residents and businesses using culturally relevant, inclusive language, hashtags, and visuals on an array of digital media platforms, including BHP's website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, email newsletters, and paid digital advertisements. Promoting relevant articles, blog posts, op-eds, community climate challenge highlights and resources.	\$ 11,700.00	<a href="#">FY23 social media budget (newsletter, Facebook, Instagram line items 8.9.12) plus website redesign</a>
Spotlighting at least 1 impactful clean energy project (e.g., solar, wind, electrification, microgrid, geothermal, storage, etc.) per month with an equity lens by telling stories from the	\$ 1,200.00	\$100 per post



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people leading and benefitting from the project, including BIPOC communities.		
Posting before, during and/or after relevant events, including key takeaways.	\$ 750.00	\$25 per post, 3 posts per event
Producing and promoting at least 1 Home Energy Advice video per quarter.	\$ 2,400.00	\$600 per video
Sharing and boosting important news and announcements with targeted, digital advertisements.	\$ 500.00	FY23 social media ad budget
Engage BHPCC and staff in job training with the Energy Savers Network summer apprentice program, which focuses on youth, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ communities.	\$ 20,000.00	2023 budget
Achieving the goals laid out in the BHP Strategic Plan requires significantly more community engagement than current staffing will allow. This extended effort will need to come from a combination of additional funding and expanded volunteer efforts from the BHPCC and those wanting greater involvement to achieve the local energy transition.		Staff time and swag for volunteer engagement (shirts, hoodies, hats, stickers?)
The BHP will track awareness, engagement, and action for each of the relevant initiatives listed above to develop a baseline throughout the year. Key performance indicators (KPIs) will then be developed for all relevant initiatives by the end of 2023, aligning with contracts the BHP has in place with the City and County. The BHP will use the KPIs to evaluate performance and adjust, as necessary, on a semi-annual basis.		Staff time on tracking estimated 2 hours per month
Meet the additional outreach and performance goals laid out in BHP contract.		
	<b>\$ 63,800.00</b>	<b>Totals</b>





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Energy Savers Network Costs:

<b>2023 projections</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Direct Staff Cost	\$141,810.31
Indirect Staff Costs	\$13,454.22
Total Staff Cost	\$155,264.53
Material Costs	\$33,624.36
Total cost	\$170,000.00
Cost per home	\$850.00

Section G) Each Vendor shall submit with its proposal the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) with authority to bind the firm and answer questions or provide clarification concerning the firm's proposal.

Sam Ruark  
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## Why Community Engagement?

The Community Engagement Plan highlights initiatives internal to BHP staff, volunteers and partners in order to provide specific actions poised to promote and implement the full plan. Community engagement is already ingrained in each individual initiative and policy; therefore, actions listed here will be utilized to support the success of the entire Strategic Plan. The Community Engagement Committee serves as a resource for the BHP Community Council (BHPCC) and its subcommittees, sharing best practices during council meetings and providing guidance, as needed.

Community engagement with Buncombe County residents, community groups, and businesses is critical to achieving the county's goal and transitioning to 100% renewable energy by 2042. The Blue Horizons Project (BHP) was created to enlist the support of the entire community and provide easy access to resources that allow everyone to be a part of creating a clean energy future.

### **The Community Engagement Plan**

In order to educate, engage and inspire action, we need to raise the visibility of the Blue Horizons Project, so people understand who we are, what we are trying to accomplish, and how we can support them in the clean energy transition. As such, the BHP's community engagement efforts focus on two important aspects of this work: 1) communications: raising awareness and expanding reach to drive positive impact and build trust and credibility, and 2) community engagement: engaging residents, community groups, and local businesses in energy-efficiency and clean-energy education and action that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Because community engagement lies at the heart of why the Blue Horizons Project was created, it is a cross-cutting function that will play a substantial role in supporting all BHP-led initiatives and policy changes that support the BHP's vision.

The following BHP-led activities will support the overall vision of the energy transition described in this strategic plan and specific initiatives and policy recommendations emerging from this plan:

### **Communications**

- Create a 30-second version of an updated BHP video to replace the 3:30-min version on the website by the end of 2023.
- Upgrades to BHP website layout, design, content (including automated customer journey directing them to appropriate resources)

- Because BHP is a Green Built Alliance program, work with a local graphic designer to update and better align the BHP logo with GBA branding by adding a leaf (on or near the sun) and possibly adding similar colors by the end of 2023.
- When there is news to share, promote it on the BHP website, through BHP's digital media platforms and directly to local media outlets and key reporters to garner media interviews and secure earned media coverage. Also create a running list of partner organizations and individuals that engage with diverse communities and promote news and events through their existing channels.
- Run at least 1 local print ad and 1 local radio ad semi-annually to showcase equitable, clean energy progress in the region and promote the community climate challenge and/or countywide event (see below).

## **Community Engagement**

- Lead and manage a month long, peer-to-peer community climate challenge, where people sign up to track and submit their climate-friendly actions on a weekly basis.
- With partners who share similar goals and objectives, plan and host – or co-host – at least 1 annual climate action-focused, countywide event that could include:
  - Prominent speakers, such as elected officials from the City and County, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community leaders, etc., including a live Q&A.
  - Expo booth showcasing a diverse array of private and public entities working to advance a just, clean energy future.
  - Award ceremony recognizing the top, most impactful local clean energy projects and companies of the year.
  - Eco-friendly prize raffle for residents who actively participated in the community climate challenge.
  - Live music from a well-known local band.
- Engage the equity focus group to conduct research and interviews with communities missing from previous engagement strategies.
- Conduct an annual environmental justice survey to better understand the unique needs and challenges of communities experiencing disproportionate environmental harms and risks.
  - Share survey findings with the City and County.
  - If applicable, update the BHP Strategic Plan to ensure it addresses the findings.
  - Promote survey findings within vulnerable communities to educate and engage residents in programs that help lower the energy burden, such as GBA's Energy Savers Network.

- Participate in and conduct outreach at least 10 relevant, local community events, speaking engagements, festivals, fairs, farmer's markets, and other forums per quarter, including BHP presentations to community groups, churches, non-profit organizations, and businesses.
  - Ensure Community Council members represent BHP by attending at least one GBA event per year.
  - Engage community members in the planning process to help ensure events are relevant and effective.
- Cast a wide net to reach Buncombe County and Asheville residents and businesses using culturally relevant, inclusive language, hashtags, and visuals on an array of digital media platforms, including BHP's website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, email newsletters, and paid digital advertisements.
- Increase engagement with BHP's digital media platforms by 5% quarterly, from a July 1, 2022, baseline, for a 20% cumulative increase across all platforms annually by:
  - Spotlighting at least 1 impactful clean energy project (e.g., solar, wind, electrification, microgrid, geothermal, storage, etc.) per month with an equity lens by telling stories from the people leading and benefitting from the project, including BIPOC communities.
  - Posting before, during and/or after relevant events, including key takeaways.
  - Producing and promoting at least 1 Home Energy Advice video per quarter.
  - Promoting relevant articles, blog posts, op-eds, community climate challenge highlights and resources.
  - Sharing and boosting important news and announcements with targeted, digital advertisements.
- Meet the outreach and performance goals laid out in the BHP contract.
- Engage BHPCC and staff in job training with the Energy Savers Network summer apprentice program, which focuses on youth, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ communities.

Achieving the goals laid out in the BHP Strategic Plan requires significantly more community engagement than current staffing will allow. This extended effort will need to come from a combination of additional funding and expanded volunteer efforts from the BHPCC and those wanting greater involvement to achieve the local energy transition.

The BHP will track awareness, engagement, and action for each of the relevant initiatives listed above to develop a baseline throughout the year. Key performance indicators (KPIs) will then be developed for all relevant initiatives by the end of 2023, aligning with contracts the BHP has in place with the City and County. The BHP will use the KPIs to evaluate performance and adjust, as necessary, on a semi-annual basis.

		Secured leveraged resources	Other Source
Direct Funding Required			
<b>Residential weatherization initiatives</b>			
ESN Weatherization Services (200 homes at \$850/h	\$120,000	\$50,000	Dogwood Health Trust
Program Evaluation	\$12,000		
<u>Leveraged programs</u>			
Home repairs for health and safety		\$100,000	Dogwood Health Trust
Other home repairs		\$35,000	Duke Energy Helping Home Fund
Tier 1 and 2 weatherization (insulation, duct sealing, etc)		\$60,000	Duke Energy Weatherization Program
Heating system replacement & Neighbor to Neighbor Solar Install		\$180,000	City (2026) and County (2025) ARPAs
Apprenticeship program		\$20,000	*Unsecured funding
<b>Blue Horizons Project Community Council Coordination</b>			
	\$30,000		
<b>Community Engagement Program</b>			
	\$63,800		
<b>Educational programming for local contractors</b>		\$10,000	GBA unrestricted funds
<b>Pilot group purchase campaign: Solarize</b>		\$10,000	
<u>Leveraged programs</u>			
Heat pump water heater crowdsource program [not secured]		\$70,000	*Unsecured - Unidentified/DOE Energy
<b>Total Funds Needed</b>	<b>\$235,800</b>	<b>\$525,000</b>	<b>\$760,800</b>

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	<b>PY24</b>	<b>PY25</b>	<b>PY26</b>
<b>ESN Weatherization Services (200 homes at \$8500 each)</b>	\$170,000	\$255,000	\$340,000
<b>Program Evaluation</b>	\$12,000	\$13,000	\$14,000
<u>Wrap Around Services for ESN Clients (leveraged dollars)</u>			
Home repairs for health and safety (Dogwood)	\$100,000	\$100,000	
Other home repairs (Duke Healthy Homes)	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
Duke Tier 1 and 2 weatherization (insulation, duct sealing)	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
Heating system replacement & Neighbor to Neighbor	\$180,000	\$160,000	\$160,000
Apprenticeship program	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
<b>Blue Horizons Project Community Council Coordination</b>	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$40,000
<b>Community Engagement Program</b>	\$63,800	\$75,000	\$80,000
<b>Educational programming for local contractors</b>	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
<b>Pilot group purchase campaign: Solarize</b>	\$10,000		
Heat pump water heater crowdsource program [not started]	\$70,000	\$70,000	
<b>Total Funds Needed</b>	<b>\$760,800</b>	<b>\$833,000</b>	<b>\$759,000</b>

Energy Savers Network 2021-22			2023 projections	Amount
Direct Staff Cost	###		Direct Staff Cost	###
Indirect Staff Costs	\$11,919.04		Indirect Staff Costs	###
Total Staff Cost	###		Total Staff Cost	###
Material Costs	\$29,787.69		Material Costs	###
HACA Homes completed	176		Total cost	###
ESN Homes completed	50		Cost per home	\$850.00
Cost per home less	###			
Cost per ESN home	\$855.70			



Task	Estimated Cost	Notes
Create a 30-second version of an updated BHP video to replace the 3:30-min version on the website by the end of 2023.	\$ 3,000.00	Outside hire
Upgrades to BHP website layout, design, content (including automated customer journey directing them to appropriate resources)	\$ 2,000.00	
Because BHP is a Green Built Alliance program, work with a local graphic designer to update and better align the BHP logo with GBA branding by adding a leaf (on or near the sun) and possibly adding similar colors by the end of 2023.	\$ 1,500.00	Outside hire
When there is news to share, promote it on the BHP website, through BHP’s digital media platforms and directly to local media outlets and key reporters to garner media interviews and secure earned media coverage. Also create a running list of partner organizations and individuals that engage with diverse communities and promote news and events through their existing channels.	\$ 750.00	Assuming 10 accounts of earned media
Run at least 1 local print ad and 1 local radio ad semi-annually to showcase equitable, clean energy progress in the region and promote the community climate challenge and/or countywide event (see below).	\$ 2,000.00	\$500 per ad
Lead and manage a month long, peer-to-peer community climate challenge, where people sign up to track and submit their climate-friendly actions on a weekly basis.		Staff time
With partners who share similar goals and objectives, plan and host – or co-host – at least 1 annual climate action-focused, countywide event that could include: Prominent speakers, such as elected officials from the City and County, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community leaders, etc., including a live Q&A. Expo booth showcasing a diverse array of private and public entities working to advance a just, clean energy future. Award ceremony recognizing the top, most impactful local clean energy projects and companies of the year. Eco-friendly prize raffle for residents who actively participated in the community climate challenge. Live music from a well-known local band.	\$ 12,000.00	Estimated first year event cost based on Earth Day 5K expenses (cash & staff time)
Engage the equity focus group to conduct research and interviews with communities missing from previous engagement strategies.		Staff time to manage group or contractor hire. Equity stipend (child care, flat payment, etc) for group members
Conduct an annual environmental justice survey to better understand the unique needs and challenges of communities experiencing disproportionate environmental harms and risks. Promote survey findings within vulnerable communities to educate and engage residents in programs that help lower the energy burden, such as GBA’s Energy Savers Network.		Staff time (+ survey software cost?)
Participate in and conduct outreach at least 10 relevant, local community events, speaking engagements, festivals, fairs, farmer's markets, and other forums per quarter, including BHP presentations to community groups, churches, non-profit organizations, and businesses. Ensure Community Council members represent BHP by attending at least one GBA event per year. Engage community members in the planning process to help ensure events are relevant and effective.	\$ 6,000.00	\$600 per event
Social Media: Increase engagement with BHP’s digital media platforms by 5% quarterly, from a July 1, 2022, baseline, for a 20% cumulative increase across all platforms annually by: Cast a wide net to reach Buncombe County and Asheville residents and businesses using culturally relevant, inclusive language, hashtags, and visuals on an array of digital media platforms, including BHP’s website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, email newsletters, and paid digital advertisements. Promoting relevant articles, blog posts, op-eds, community climate challenge highlights and resources.	\$ 11,700.00	<a href="#">FY23 social media budget (newsletter,</a>

Spotlighting at least 1 impactful clean energy project (e.g., solar, wind, electrification, microgrid, geothermal, storage, etc.) per month with an equity lens by telling stories from the people leading and benefitting from the project, including BIPOC communities.	\$ 1,200.00	\$100 per post
Posting before, during and/or after relevant events, including key takeaways.	\$ 750.00	\$25 per post, 3 posts per event
Producing and promoting at least 1 Home Energy Advice video per quarter.	\$ 2,400.00	\$600 per video
Sharing and boosting important news and announcements with targeted, digital advertisements.	\$ 500.00	FY23 social media ad budget
Engage BHPCC and staff in job training with the Energy Savers Network summer apprentice program, which focuses on youth, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ communities.	\$ 20,000.00	2023 budget
Achieving the goals laid out in the BHP Strategic Plan requires significantly more community engagement than current staffing will allow. This extended effort will need to come from a combination of additional funding and expanded volunteer efforts from the BHPCC and those wanting greater involvement to achieve the local energy transition.		Staff time and swag for volunteer engagement (shirts, hoodies, hats, stickers?)
The BHP will track awareness, engagement, and action for each of the relevant initiatives listed above to develop a baseline throughout the year. Key performance indicators (KPIs) will then be developed for all relevant initiatives by the end of 2023, aligning with contracts the BHP has in place with the City and County. The BHP will use the KPIs to evaluate performance and adjust, as necessary, on a semi-annual basis.		Staff time on tracking estimated 2 hours per month
Meet the additional outreach and performance goals laid out in BHP contract.		
	<b>\$ 63,800.00</b>	<b>Totals</b>

Action	Staff dedicated to this action	Percentage of staff time
Engagement with Duke Energy Progress	Sam and Sophie	Sam: 10%; Sophie: 15%
Residential engagement and program promotions	Sophie and future BHP Associate	Sophie: 25%; BHP Associate: 30%
Business engagement and program promotions	Sophie and future BHP Associate	Sophie: 20%; BHP Associate: 20%
Scale up energy-efficiency and weatherization resources to low-income residents	Yulia and Kelvin with support from Volunteers, Green Opportunities and UCD	Yulia 100%, Kelvin 100%, Hannah 75%; Sam 10%
Promotion of BHP and renewable-energy goals through education and community engagement	Sam, Sophie, and future BHP Associate	Sam: 10%; Sophie: 25%; BHP Associate: 25%; Southface (Commercial); 25%
100% Renewables Implementation Plan	Sam, Brad Rouse, and Southface	Sam 5% Brad 30%, Southface 50%
Facilitate and manage the BHP Community Council	Sam with support from Sophie	Sam: 20%; Sophie: 10%
Liaise between BHPCC, BHP staff, and City and County	Sam and Sophie	Sam: 5%; Sophie 5%
Secure additional funding through grants, donors and events	Sam Ruark-Eastes with support from all staff and volunteers	Sam: 35%; Southface 25%
Provide continuous reporting on a variety of metrics to establish verifiable program effectiveness	Hannah and/or Yulia will provide Weatherization metrics, Sophie on BHP program participation, and Sam and Maggie on financials	5% for Hannah, Yuila, Sophie Sam and Maggie

Plan to increase the engagement of BIPOC communities with the move towards 100% renewable energy:

1. **Conduct ongoing research**: Start by conducting research on the communities you want to engage with. Sustain research by using the focus group as a source of connection and information. Value interview with community as primary source with equal weight to scholarly articles. Create methods of ongoing engagement so people you meet from various cultures feel comfortable and welcome. Consider demographics, energy needs, and cultural values. This information will help you tailor your messaging and outreach efforts.
2. **Develop key partnerships**: Identify organizations or individuals within the diverse communities you want to engage with and form partnerships. These partnerships can help you gain trust, access hard-to-reach populations, and amplify your message. Engagement looks like the following: inviting them to meetings, volunteering for their projects, sponsoring their initiatives, inviting them to present on your media platforms (podcasts, newsletters, etc), push their priority messages to your communities)
3. **Create culturally-appropriate messaging**: Develop messaging that resonates with the diverse communities you want to engage with. This messaging should consider language, cultural values, and community-specific energy needs.
4. **Host community events**: Host community events that provide education and awareness about renewable energy. These events can include workshops, presentations, and hands-on demonstrations. Make sure to engage community members in the planning process to ensure that the events are relevant and effective.
5. **Provide resources**: Provide resources that make it easy for community members to transition to renewable energy. This can include information about financing options, installation assistance, and energy-saving tips.
6. **Measure impact**: Track and measure the impact of your efforts. This can include the number of community members engaged, the number of renewable energy installations, and the amount of energy saved.
7. **Continuously improve**: Continuously evaluate and improve your outreach efforts to ensure that they are effective and relevant to the diverse communities you want to engage with.

following these steps, you can successfully engage with more diverse communities and help them transition to 100% renewable energy.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Here are some new, cutting-edge strategies that you can use to get more Black people involved in your renewable energy project:

1. **Utilize social media:** Social media platforms are a powerful tool for reaching new audiences, especially among younger people. Consider creating a social media campaign specifically targeted at Black communities, using relevant hashtags and partnering with social media influencers who are Black and have large followings.
2. **Create culturally-relevant content:** Black communities have unique cultural values and perspectives that can be leveraged to engage them in renewable energy. Consider creating content, such as videos or blog posts, that address how renewable energy aligns with the values and concerns of Black communities.
3. **Provide job training and opportunities:** Many Black communities experience high unemployment rates, and providing job training and opportunities in the renewable energy sector can be an effective way to engage them in the industry. Consider partnering with local organizations to provide training programs and job opportunities specifically targeted at Black communities.
4. **Host community events with Black leaders and influencers:** Hosting community events with Black leaders and influencers can help build trust and credibility within Black communities. Consider partnering with local Black organizations or inviting Black leaders and influencers to speak at your events.
5. **Address equity concerns:** Black communities are often disproportionately impacted by environmental degradation and energy poverty. Consider addressing these equity concerns in your messaging and outreach efforts, highlighting how renewable energy can help address these disparities.

By using these cutting-edge strategies, you can effectively engage Black communities in your renewable energy project, helping to build a more diverse and inclusive renewable energy industry.

## SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES

Here are some specific social media strategies that might work to help increase engagement from the Black community:

1. **Use culturally-relevant visuals:** Incorporating culturally-relevant visuals, such as images of Black families, art, and music, can help your social media content resonate more with the Black community. This can help your content stand out and capture attention.
2. **Partner with Black influencers:** Partnering with Black influencers on social media can help you reach a wider audience within the Black community. Identify popular influencers who align with your messaging and partner with them to create content that resonates with their followers.
3. **Use relevant hashtags:** Using relevant hashtags that are popular among the Black community, such as #BlackLivesMatter or #BlackExcellence, can help your social media content reach a wider audience within the community. Make sure to research which hashtags are most relevant to your messaging.
4. **Share success stories:** Sharing success stories of Black individuals who have transitioned to renewable energy can help inspire and motivate others within the community to do the same. Consider highlighting these success stories on your social media channels.
5. **Address environmental justice concerns:** The Black community is often disproportionately impacted by environmental degradation and energy poverty. Addressing these concerns in your social media messaging can help show that your renewable energy project is aligned with the community's values and concerns.
6. **Provide practical information:** Providing practical information, such as step-by-step guides for transitioning to renewable energy or information on financial incentives, can help empower the Black community to take action towards renewable energy.

By using these social media strategies, you can effectively engage the Black community in your renewable energy project, helping to build a more inclusive and equitable renewable energy industry.



June 12, 2023

Ron Venturella  
Buncombe County Procurement Department  
200 College Street, Suite 420  
Asheville, NC 28801

**RE: Buncombe County Request for Proposals, Blue Horizons Project, Section A: Cover Letter**

Blue Horizons Project Proposal Selection Committee:

Green Built Alliance is pleased to submit this proposal to continue administering and implementing Blue Horizons Project programming and facilitating the Blue Horizons Project Community Council.

Green Built Alliance was founded in 2001 to advance sustainable living, green building, and climate justice through community education, inspired action, and collaborative partnerships. This includes the successful implementation of programs such as the Blue Horizons Project, Energy Savers Network, Green Built Homes, Appalachian Offsets, and community outreach.

Green Built Alliance was a member of the Energy Innovation Task Force (EITF) since its inception in May 2016, and has successfully managed and executed the Blue Horizons Project since its launch in 2018. During that time, we have built collaborative relationships with the City of Asheville and Buncombe County, local nonprofits, neighborhood associations, businesses, and community members who are working towards a cleaner energy future for our county.

In the Blue Horizons Project's first five years, we have met and exceeded annual goals for energy-efficiency program participation and community engagement. Our strong team, subject matter expertise, proven track record in program implementation and matching fundraising are outlined in the following proposal. We look forward to continuing our bold approach to reaching 100% renewable energy adoption in the most equitable and collaborative way possible.

We thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The Staff and Board of Green Built Alliance

1 Haywood Street, Suite 463  
Asheville, NC 28801



Section B: Title Page

Green Built Alliance  
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Sam Ruark, Executive Director  
828-301-0774 (m)  
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RFP Response for Blue Horizons Project Management

**Section c) Describe the background, experience, and capabilities of your firm as it relates to the Scope of Work outlined in the RFP.**

### **Green Built Alliance Qualifications for BHP Implementation**

Since 2001, Green Built Alliance (GBA) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that has been advancing sustainability in the built environment through community education, measurable standards, and regional action. This includes the successful implementation of programs such as:

- Green Built Homes
- Appalachian Offsets
- Educational workshops for building professionals and the community
- Blue Horizons Project
- Energy Savers Network

These community-driven initiatives, equitably serving all people in Buncombe County and City of Asheville, have delivered results toward the City and County's renewable energy goals for over five years. This success has been possible through the expertise of our 11 staff members, diverse subcontractors, and our volunteer board. Since 2015, through this expertise, GBA has secured over \$1.25 million of matching support from private sources such as Dogwood Health Trust, Kendeda Foundation, Community Foundation WNC, Southeast Sustainability Directors Network, Bank of America and Duke Energy, as well as individual donations and event revenue to dramatically increase the impact of the public dollars awarded by the City and County.

### **Green Built Alliance Achievements (by initiative)**

#### Blue Horizons Project Community Council

Green Built Alliance staff has administered and supported The Blue Horizons Project (BHP) Community Council's work to reach 100% renewable energy in Buncombe County by 2042 since GBA was just a member in 2018, when the BHP was called the Energy Innovation Task Force. The BHP Community Council plays a pivotal leadership role in identifying community-led solutions and driving the renewable energy transition in Western North Carolina from a technology, community and equity focus.

Recommendations from the BHP Community Council have identified 3 key strategies to renewable energy adoption: electrify everything, green the grid and embrace efficiency. To achieve these aims, the BHP Community Council has directed GBA to do strong public outreach and written a collaborative, community-oriented plan to reach our shared 100% renewable goals. Funds for this portion of work were provided by The Kendeda Foundation.

Green Built Alliance's staff guides this body with administrative support and community organizing expertise. In return, the BHP Community Council provides community oversight and guidance to ensure the



highest quality outcomes for the BHP's goals. Composed of diverse community representatives, the council serves as a unified voice advocating for clean energy initiatives and sustainability practices. GBA has successfully implemented previous BHP Community Council recommendations, including expanding energy efficiency programs, promoting community engagement, focusing on equity, exploring agrivoltaics, and certifying Green Built Homes.

In addition to direct service to low-income households, GBA has increased participation in Duke Peak Demand Response and Energy-Efficiency programs, resulting in tripling the number of Duke EnergyWise Home multifamily signups, doubling the number of Duke EnergyWise Home single family signups and growing program participation to a higher rate than any region served by Duke Energy Progress West according to the Duke Energy EM&V Report (2019).

#### Blue Horizons Project Community Outreach

At the guidance of the BHP Community Council, and funding from the City and County, GBA has conducted an expanded on-the-ground outreach campaign in FY23. Staff and volunteers have attended presentations or tabled at events to reach 52 groups and visibility to 40,055 event attendees. There were 1,224 individual conversations live, and in-person, on ways to save energy, improve sustainability, and install renewable energy, as well as dozens of sign ups for residential energy saving programs and referrals to partner agencies like Community Action Opportunities, Habitat for Humanity and Waste Reduction Partners.

Experts on the BHP Community Engagement Subcommittee, in partnership with GBA staff, have drafted a [new outreach plan for FY24](#) that GBA intends to implement as a core part of this proposal.

#### Blue Horizons Project Equity and Inclusion

The BHP Community Council and its subcommittees have been actively working on the strategic plan, including finalizing the first full draft and convening an Equity Taskforce to ensure diverse representation. Led by J Hackett, the [Equity Taskforce offered a report](#) that recommends we engage BIPOC communities in the renewable energy transition by conducting research, forming key partnerships, using culturally-appropriate messaging, hosting community events, providing resources, measuring impact, and continuously improving. For the Black community, we shall utilize social media, offer job training, involve Black leaders, and address equity concerns. It's a heavy lift, but incorporating this feedback into the FY24 community engagement plan and BHP Community Council efforts will be essential in FY24.

#### Energy Savers Network (ESN)

Expert staff members lead volunteers to weatherize low-income homes (both mobile homes and stick built) in Buncombe County and the City of Asheville to help increase equity to access in the 100% renewable energy transition. In addition to outreach to the general public, GBA staff have attended dozens of events at partner organizations like Manna Food Bank and Eblen Charities, to recruit participants in the ESN weatherization program.

Starting in March 2023, Duke Energy's low-income weatherization program, administered by TRC, began to allow additional resources for Tier 2 weatherization, heat pump upgrades, and refrigerator replacement. Staff have begun implementing these programs for ESN clients, but it's too soon to report direct outcomes



for this program. Involvement and advocacy at the state-level Energy Efficiency Collaborative were conducted to reach this outcome through previous BHP funding.

Outcomes: ESN has provided approximately 2.1 gigawatt-hours (gWh) of savings across almost 1,000 households since 2017.

#### Neighbor to Neighbor Solar

Neighbor to Neighbor empowers communities through the installation of solar systems on low-income family's homes, thus fostering renewable energy adoption and strengthening bonds among neighbors for a sustainable future. Through a competitive bid, local company Sugar Hollow Solar was selected and has since begun system installation.

Outcomes: Two rounds of programming, one in 2021 and one in the current fiscal year.

In 2021, 6 households received PV systems with an installed production of 24.85 kW, capable of 34,424 kWh of production annually.

In the second round, currently ongoing, since December 2022, we have installed 7 systems with 3.95 kW capacity, capable of over 35,000 kWh of annual production.

#### Solarize Asheville-Buncombe 2021

Solarize Asheville-Buncombe was a community-driven initiative aimed at promoting and accelerating the adoption of solar energy in Buncombe County and the City of Asheville. It offered residents and businesses discounted pricing, streamlined processes, and access to reputable solar installers. The program included free site evaluations, quotes, and educational outreach to inspire widespread solar installations and create a more sustainable future. From the campaign in 2021, homeowners installed 182 systems that produce 2,009,732 kWh annually and an estimated \$251,215 in annual utility bill savings for homeowners.

Community wide, the campaign added more than \$4.69 million in new clean energy development and eliminated as much as 2,689,753 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> annually from the local environment. This is equivalent to removing as many as 1,344 tons and 163 cars from local roadways for one year. Added battery/energy storage as a result of the campaign equaled 125 kWh.

Solarize Asheville-Buncombe was supported and led by a coalition of more than a dozen community members and organizations including Green Built Alliance, Blue Horizons Project, City of Asheville, Buncombe County, the Center for Biological Diversity, Sierra Club, Umoja, Hood Huggers, Asheville Homestay Network, Lenoir-Rhyne University, MountainTrue, The Collider, and administered by Solar Crowdsourcing. This proposal includes a new round of Solarize in Asheville- Buncombe to be conducted in FY24.

#### GBA Reporting to City and County staff

GBA staff have provided all necessary materials to the City and County for payment of the quarterly invoices. In each year of our previous contracts we have come in at or under budget for the scope of work delivery. There have been some minor pivots to the scope of work over the years and we appreciate the

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Asheville, NC 28801



collaboration of City and County staff of ensuring that any changes made reflect the purpose of the grant.



### **Green Built Alliance Values:**

- Sustainability
- Inclusiveness and equity
- Financial responsibility
- Community collaboration
- Supporting staff, contractors and volunteers to be healthy and happy
- Using best practices in building science, energy efficiency, and renewable energy
- Helping people and the planet to adapt to change and build skillful resilience

### **Green Built Alliance Board of Directors:**

Green Built Alliance is on solid financial footing and benefits from the leadership of a great staff team and Board of Directors. The GBA Board provides strategic guidance and oversight of our nonprofit, charitable purpose.

The 13-member Green Built Alliance Board of Directors is composed of professionals representing a diverse range of backgrounds in building trades, nonprofit and environmental organizations. In the past five years, we have diversified the board in terms of race, gender, and professional background.

The list of board and staff can be found here: <https://www.greenbuilt.org/about/board-staff/>

### **Green Built Alliance Staff and Team:**

#### Sam Ruark, Executive Director

Sam has been working in the field of sustainability and clean energy for 25 years. In his seven years as Executive Director, Green Built Alliance has grown in its scope and impact. In the past five years, we have successfully implemented the Blue Horizons Project; completed energy-efficiency upgrades for more than 1,000 homes; raised \$450,000 for the Isaac Dickson Elementary School solar system; educated more than 4,000 building professionals and members of the public; certified more than 600 Green Built Homes; and produced events, directories, and a comprehensive and well-used website.

Earlier in his career, Sam assisted the County of Marin and County of Sonoma in California in developing, managing and implementing energy-efficiency and solar-energy programs through the Planning Department in Marin and the General Services Department in Sonoma. This work included participating in the development of Community Choice Aggregation in both counties, which allowed the local governments to choose from whom they purchased electricity, providing for greater use of renewables. He also was project lead on a 700-kW photovoltaic system installation, oversaw the creation of two clean-energy ordinances, and provided education to staff, building professionals, and the public on the value and how-to of green building.



He has managed several large grants from the US Department of Energy, Pacific Gas & Electric, and Southeast Sustainability Directors Network, and smaller grants or projects from Z Smith Reynolds Foundation, Duke Energy, the Kendeda Fund, and the Community Foundation of WNC.

Sam serves on the statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative with Duke Energy and state leaders on clean energy. This connection has opened the opportunity to be a contractor with Duke Energy for Fee For service and the Helping Home Fund.

#### Sam's Role in BHP:

- Bring forth ideas for BHPCC to consider
- Support and direct staff in implementing and evaluating strategies developed at the BHPCC
- Directing and coaching BHP staff to ensure all deliverables are being met
- Creating contracts for subcontractors
- Liaison with City and County staff and elected officials to ensure their ideas are being considered and incorporated
- Set fundraising goals and lead grant applications

#### Jamie Wine, Clean Energy Program Manager

Jamie is the manager of day-to-day activities in the Energy Savers Network and Blue Horizons Project programs at Green Built Alliance. Jamie joined Green Built Alliance in the spring of 2022. He hails most recently from New Orleans where he was the executive director at an education and outreach nonprofit for energy efficiency and building science across Louisiana. Before that, in Seattle, California and Boston, as a staff leader, he developed nonprofit programs for varied audiences like students in grades K-12, ocean advocates, traffic engineers, community organizers, adults, families and youth.

Jamie is deeply committed to community empowerment through education, fighting the climate crisis, and bringing environmental justice to disadvantaged communities. While an executive decision is often easier, he believes a collaborative approach yields a more satisfying result. Working with the BHP Community Council to achieve collaborative success has been rewarding and productive for him and the team.

Jamie received a dual major bachelors degree in science in marine biology and environmental studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and holds professional certifications in building performance, leadership development, public speaking and real estate.

#### Jamie's Role in BHP:

Manage program goals and objectives to achieve funder and BHP Community Council goals for reaching 100% renewable energy by 2042.

- Blue Horizons Project Community Council (BHPCC) Management
- Primary staff point of contact for all BHP Community Council activities. Coordinate with City, County and GBA staff as well as BHP Community Council Members, Chair and Vice-



Chair to determine objectives, run meetings and convene subcommittees.

- Providing updates to the Blue Horizons Project Community Council on activities, deliverables, and results.
- Coordinate BHPCC members and support their engagement in programs, working groups, and advocacy at state legislature and North Carolina Utilities Commission.
- Managing and mentoring staff working on BHP and ESN programs.
- Primary fundraiser to small foundations for program leverage.
- Securing additional support from Duke Energy for program participants:
  - Coordinate with Duke's Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative.
  - Promote Duke Energy's residential energy efficiency efforts to increase participation in Duke Energy Progress Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy programs: Energy Wise Home and Business, Home Energy House Call and Smart \$aver.
- Providing public training and presentations on energy efficiency.

#### Summer Winkler, Clean Energy Program Coordinator

Summer joined Green Built Alliance in the summer of 2021 as an intern and was hired to work on staff in the spring of 2022. She grew up in Western North Carolina and after a few years in New York City and Raleigh, she is thrilled to call these mountains home again.

She graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2016 with a degree in global studies, focusing on health and environment. Summer's foray into sustainability grew in her personal life with the zero-waste movement and a cross-country road trip where she spent several months camping, spending time in nature, and learning how different cities approached sustainability and had access to it. She then received a Graduate Certificate of Sustainability from Virginia Tech.

#### Summer's Role in BHP:

- Primary organizer for the Community Engagement Plan.
  - Organizing and attending community and neighborhood events that promote energy-efficiency programs.
  - Coordinating media, social media, and community engagement for the project.
  - Providing content and updates to the Blue Horizons Project website.
  - Newsletter author and coordination.
- Communications coordination for BHP and ESN
  - Coordinating overall Marketing Plan for Clean Energy programming.
  - Energy Savers Network social media and newsletter coordination.
  - Promotion of Home Energy Chats through marketing materials and advertising.
- Neighbor to Neighbor coordination, including screening candidates and interfacing with the solar installation contractor (currently Sugar Hollow Solar).
- Supporting BHPCC and subcommittees by convening meetings, taking notes and acting as a link between all subcommittees.
- Coordinating BHP financially supportive events, like the Earth Day 5k.
- Supporting summer pre-apprenticeship program





### Kelvin Bonilla, Energy Savers Network Manager

Kelvin Bonilla, a native of Honduras, brings more than a decade of experience in the building performance industry to the Energy Savers Network team.

He started his career with Green Opportunities, gaining vast experience in the field as a crew leader, mentor, and instructor in the classroom. He went on to work with Conservation Pros, a small locally owned building performance company. Some of the highlights of his career include teaching more than 300 community members Building Performance Institute standards; instructing City of Asheville employees on building science best practices; and performing weatherization on Asheville's Red Cross and countless homes, including 1,200 units for the Housing Authority of the City of Asheville. He has worked in partnerships with local nonprofits such as Community Action Opportunities and the Neighbors Saves program. Kelvin became an OSHA instructor, teaching workplace safety and employee rights at construction and manufacturing companies throughout the southeast.

Kelvin has multiple professional certifications including BPI, HERS, Lead Safe Renovator, Class III Asbestos Worker, CPR instructor, and OSHA-30.

In his work with the Energy Savers Network, Kelvin wants to continue his passion of reducing the energy consumption of homes in marginalized communities, which are often the most affected by climate change. He is truly passionate about building performance and applying triple-bottom-line principles to help affect positive change for the people in our local community who need it the most.

### Kelvin's role in Energy Savers Network:

- Managing energy-efficiency upgrades for low-income households, including:
  - Performing blower-door tests
  - Providing clients with energy-conservation strategies specific to their home
  - Materials handling (e.g. purchasing, storage, tracking, etc.)
  - Team lead for workdays
- Community engagement and program promotion (e.g. community presentations, partnership building, implementation of Duke's Fee For Service, Duke's Helping Home Fund, etc.)
- Manage client services for Spanish-speaking households.
- Offering technical training for staff, subcontractors, and volunteers
- Assisting with client outreach and educational workshops
- Handling project verification for subcontractors
- Referring clients to other service providers such as Community Action Opportunities, Mountain Housing Opportunities, Council on Aging, ABCCM, food banks such as Manna, Eblen Charities, etc.
- Project and client database management
- Managing the summer pre-apprenticeship program





### Steffi Rausch, Volunteer and Web Coordinator

Steffi joined Green Built Alliance in early 2021. She brings 23 years of experience as a self-employed web designer and seven years of climate advocacy volunteer work as a chapter leader for Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL). While she still advocates for a bipartisan federal climate policy with CCL in her spare time as a volunteer, she is excited to transition her full-time work to serving her local community in ways that help sustain a livable planet by reducing our carbon emissions. She finds the two opportunities with her career and volunteer work, to serve and protect the most vulnerable of society while protecting the planet, to be extremely rewarding and a way to grow her compassion towards others.

### Steffi's role in Energy Savers Network:

- Volunteer recruitment, engagement, and retention
- Develop, promote, and maintain a wide range of volunteer opportunities within the organization (e.g. client recruitment volunteers, weatherization volunteers, client satisfaction outreach volunteers, storm windows workshop volunteers, team lead volunteers, etc.).
- Develop and manage client and volunteer policies, procedures, and standards of volunteer service
- Organize and participate in volunteer-recognition programs and special events.
- Maintain accurate records and provide timely statistical and activity reports on the operations.

### Hannah Egan, Outreach and Resource Manager

Hannah Egan joined Green Built Alliance in early 2018 as an intern and transitioned to work on staff later that year. She is now a leader at GBA in reporting in the nonprofit sector, green building, and energy efficiency. Hannah graduated from Appalachian State University in 2012 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Sustainable Development concentrated in Community, Regional, and Global Development. Hannah's role is critical in connecting BHP and ESN work with the myriad funding sources and reporting that is required to support the work.

Originally from just outside Baltimore, Hannah moved to New Zealand after college and then back home to Maryland before returning to the Blue Ridge Mountains. She is excited to apply her skills and education to an organization that is dedicated to creating a better built environment for the entire community.

### Hannah's Role in BHP:

- Operations management:
  - Client tracking in our Salesforce database
  - Collecting and analyzing program data to report back to funders.
  - Managing funders' needs to meet client and weatherization objectives.
  - Internal quality control for weatherization programs.
  - Coordination with Duke Energy to collect outcome data.
  - Strategic visioning with ESN staff to responsibly grow program impact by leveraging various funding sources.
  - Submit client and project information to Duke Energy for Fee for Service



rebates

- Coordinate with subcontractors for HVAC install and safety improvements available through matching grants such as ARPA.

#### Mikal Bonilla, Energy Savers Network Crew Leader

Originally a volunteer for Energy Savers Network, Mikal joined Green Built Alliance's staff in the spring of 2022. A native of beautiful North Carolina, Mikal has had a deep love and appreciation for Mother Earth instilled in her since childhood. This, coupled with Mikal's compassion and lifelong desire to help others, made a career with Green Built Alliance of particular interest for her.

Born in the Piedmont Triad with roots in Eastern North Carolina, Mikal has called these mountains home since 2016. Offering a varied set of skills and experience, some of her most proud accomplishments include her time working with FEMA after the tragic hurricanes Irma and Maria; her time spent exploring the "strange and unknown" for FATE magazine; and most recently, dedicating many weeks to the county-wide efforts to provide the COVID-19 vaccine to Western North Carolina with the Buncombe County Health Department in 2021.

#### Mikal's Role in Energy Savers Network

- ESN weatherization client recruitment, scheduling, and followup.
- Lead workdays at client homes.
- Volunteer management and appreciation.
- Coordinating the summer pre-apprenticeship program.
- Managing materials use and recycling for ESN.

#### Amber Gilot, Human Resources and Finance Manager

Amber joined Green Built Alliance in early 2021. Born and raised in the mountains of Western North Carolina, these mountains, valleys and rivers are part of Amber's blood.

Her passion and drive for doing work that matters began while at Warren Wilson College, a service-oriented work-college nestled in the rolling hills of Swannanoa, NC. This passion stayed with her as she began her professional career in Asheville. She now has more than 12 years of experience using organizational management, bookkeeping and writing for businesses who are focused on a triple bottom line and local community and environmental matters. Amber is passionate about working with organizations, businesses and people who care about more than just the bottom line. Social, environmental and economic justice and issues of the soul and heart are at the core of who she works with.

Amber does the bookkeeping for all GBA activities and supports Human Resources needs.

#### Energy Savers Network (ESN) and Volunteers

Energy Savers Network (ESN) mobilizes volunteers to provide energy upgrades, energy education, and assessments to low-income families in Buncombe County. ESN is supported by 30 - 40 key volunteers



who support the workdays and events.

#### 2013 Ford Transit Connect Vans

GBA continues to use two branded, wrapped Ford Transit Connect Vans to transport materials, a blower door, and project team to our clients' homes. These vehicles allow us to minimize personal vehicle use and have a nicely organized place to store, restock and transport supplies for our weatherization projects. This new resource was made possible by individual donations by ESN supporters, including core ESN volunteers.



## Scope of Services

Green Built Alliance will be the major implementer of the scope of services including:

Action	Staff dedicated to this action	Percentage of task
Engagement with Duke Energy Progress	Sam and Jamie	Sam: 40%; Jamie: 60%
Residential engagement and program promotions	Jamie and Summer	Jamie: 40%; Summer: 60%
Business engagement and program promotions	Jamie and Summer	Jamie: 50%; Summer: 50%
Energy-efficiency and weatherization resources to low-income residents	Kelvin, Hannah, and Mikal with support from Sam & Volunteers	Mikal: 40%, Kelvin: 40%, Hannah: 15%; Sam: 5%
Promotion of BHP and renewable-energy goals through education and community engagement	Jamie and Summer	Jamie: 50%; Summer: 50%
2024 Solarize Campaign	Summer and Jamie	Summer: 60%; Jamie 40%
100% Renewables Plan Implementation	BHPCC, Sam, Jamie, Summer	Sam: 10%; Jamie: 50%; Summer: 40%
Facilitate and manage the BHP Community Council	Jamie with support from Summer	Jamie: 70%; Summer: 30%
Liaise between BHPCC, BHP staff, and City and County	Sam and Jamie	Jamie: 80%; Sam: 20%

## Scope of Work: Summary

Blue Horizons Project aims to achieve a community-wide transition to 100% renewable energy by 2042 through community engagement, programming, and collaboration with Buncombe County and the City of Asheville.



The primary deliverable is the implementation of the Blue Horizons Project and management of its advisory board, the Blue Horizons Project Community Council. This includes administering the low-income weatherization program called Energy Savers Network.

Priority programs include residential weatherization initiatives, educational programming for contractors, and a solar energy group purchase campaign (aka, “Solarize”).

Support services involve providing administrative and campaign support, securing additional funding, and conducting program impact analysis.

Data analysis will inform program modifications, track progress, and measure metrics such as clients served, program participation, cost savings, energy reductions, and carbon impact.

## **Scope of Work: Detailed**

### Blue Horizons Project Community Council

Cost to County and City: \$30,000

Green Built Alliance staff will continue to administer The Blue Horizons Project Community Council to deliver on the three key priorities in reaching 100% renewable energy county-wide by 2042: green the grid, electrify everything and embrace efficiency. Guidance from the Community Council, its subcommittees, and our equity subcontractor indicated this work will heavily focus on conducting quality live and remote meetings, support services for volunteer board members, and implementation of their recommendations for technology adoption, community engagement and equity-focused outreach. These tactics and activities include:

- Organization and support of monthly meetings for each body
  - Full Community Council
  - Subcommittees as existing and newly created
  - City & County Staff coordination meeting
  - BHP Community Council leader coordination meeting
- Supporting other organizations and the BHP Community Council in implementing the new 100% Renewable Energy Plan.
  - Catalyzing BHP Council Members and other organizations like Land of Sky Regional Council, Waste Reduction Partners Duke Energy, Local HVAC contractors, Solar energy installers as well as those yet to be identified, to directly address community energy needs beyond the resources of GBA.
- Implementing [Equity and Inclusion Taskforce Plan](#) with an emphasis on personal, direct connections and interactions to bring new members into the leadership structure of BHP Community Council.
  - Conduct ongoing research: Conduct research on the target communities, utilizing focus groups and community interviews as primary sources of information.
  - Develop key partnerships: Form partnerships with organizations and individuals within the diverse communities to gain trust and access hard-to-reach populations.



- Create culturally-appropriate messaging: Tailor messaging to resonate with the diverse communities, considering language, cultural values, and energy needs.
- Host community events: Organize educational events, workshops, and demonstrations to raise awareness about renewable energy, involving community members in the planning process.
- Provide resources: Offer information on financing options, installation assistance, and energy-saving tips to support community members in transitioning to renewable energy.
- Measure impact: Track community engagement, renewable energy installations, and energy savings to evaluate the effectiveness of outreach efforts.
- Continuously improve: Regularly assess and improve outreach strategies to ensure they remain relevant and effective for engaging diverse communities.
- Implementing the Community Engagement Plan (detail below).
- Using existing, publicly available resources, GBA will report data to the BHP Community Council establishing a to-date baseline energy accomplishments and ongoing progress updates toward the 100% renewable goal through an on-agenda dashboard.

#### Blue Horizons Project Community Outreach

Cost to County and City: \$ 61,800

Experts on the BHP Community Engagement Subcommittee, in partnership with GBA staff, have collaboratively drafted a [new outreach plan for FY24](#). This plan was scheduled to be adopted at the July 2023 BHP Community Council meeting. However, this iterative process will likely take a little longer for the BHP Community Council to finalize and adopt. However, based on the current plan consensus, GBA intends to implement this plan as a core part of our work under this proposal.

- Phase I involves updating the BHP video, BHP website, improving the logo, promoting news through various media platforms, and running local advertisements.
- Phase II includes a community climate challenge, hosting climate action-focused events, conducting an environmental justice survey, and participating in community outreach.
- A core element in all the objectives is including the findings from the Equity Taskforce in implementing the outreach plan.
- Utilize social media and digital media platforms to increase engagement, share clean energy projects, provide home energy advice, and promote resources.
- Performance will be tracked using key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate and adjust initiatives on a semi-annual basis.

The plan also relies on our existing partnerships in the community with other nonprofits and our own member companies to help spread the word about BHP's work and how to reach the 100% renewable energy goals by 2042.

#### Energy Savers Network (ESN) Weatherization

Total Cost: \$180,000

Cost to County and City: \$130,000

Matching Funds: \$50,000

With 18,000 mobile homes and 40,000 people living below the poverty line in Buncombe County, there are



many people who need this support. By addressing the pressing problems of lower-income housing affordability and economic inequality, funding weatherization at an expanded level would be an efficient way for Buncombe County to make its first major effort toward achieving community-wide goals of 100 percent renewable energy by 2042 for the community. At a target rate of 600 homes per year, we could make a substantial dent in improving the efficiency of low-income homes by 2042. We aim for 200 homes per year in this contract and continue to seek resources to expand this programming.

At a total cost per home of \$850, with \$600 per home coming from this contract, expert staff members will lead volunteers to weatherize low-income homes (both mobile homes and stick built) in Buncombe County and the City of Asheville to help increase equity access in the 100% renewable energy transition. Outreach to Spanish speaking communities has been a cornerstone of our programs in FY23, with 22% of households being members of this group. We will use lessons learned so far, and [the equity outreach plan](#), to reach additional BIPOC communities more effectively.

Our outreach to diverse communities has improved over the years, and in FY23 we served mostly non-white households for the first time. Clients self-identify their race in a follow up survey. These are the demographics of our clients in ESN since program inception compared the current program year::

	<b><u>Cumulative (FY18 - FY23)</u></b>	<b><u>FY23 Only</u></b>
<b>White</b>	53%	29%
<b>Black</b>	24%	18%
<b>Latine</b>	22%	47%
<b>Native American</b>	0%	0.5%
<b>Multiracial</b>	0%	3%
<b>Other</b>	1.5%	1%

Additional outreach to find qualified clients comes from Eblen Charities (distributors of LIHEAP funds), MANNA food bank, community events and most successfully, via word of mouth.

Measurement and verification (M&V) for this program, will be conducted in partnership with Vandemusser Design PLLC, with whom we have been working with for three years. Reporting will provide impact and energy savings data analysis. From these annual reports, we will utilize that data to inform program modifications and recommendations for continuous improvement. Tracked metrics will include client cost savings, energy reductions, and carbon impact among others. In addition, we will track internally with our Salesforce database, number of clients served and increases in program participation.

Matching funds come from a Dogwood Health Trust Grant and Duke Energy incentives.



We work extensively with Mountain Housing Opportunities, Habitat for Humanity and Community Action Opportunities through client referrals and regular check-in meetings to be sure we're serving the community as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Energy Savers Network (ESN) - Home Repair and Heating repair and replacement

Total Cost (estimated): \$305,000

Total Cost to County and City: \$0

Matching Funds: \$305,000

Clients will receive weatherization and home improvement services available through funding sources secured separately by GBA. These include:

\$165,000 - Home safety repair and upgrades for improvements like leaky roofs, unsafe stairs and guardrails, holes in drywall, bathroom safety improvements and smoke/CO detectors. This program is underwritten by Duke's Health Homes program and the Dogwood Health Trust. Repairs are performed by Tony Berskins and United Community Development.

\$80,000 - Through fee-for-service reimbursement, the team will utilize Tier 2 Duke Energy Weatherization for Low Income Families funding from the utility. Home improvements can include similar items as Dogwood, but also HVAC improvements and tier 2 improvements like insulation and additional air sealing for attic and crawl spaces.

\$100,000 - ARPA HVAC repair and replacement funds are available to replace systems that are not working or to do fuel switching from fossil fuels to electric heat pump systems.

Managing these myriad funding sources in a coherent and single-source way with our clients, helps low-income households access much needed resources. ESN is a conduit for low-income families to save money, live healthier and be more comfortable in their own homes, not just through energy efficiency, but through these additional, GBA-administered programs.

Neighbor to Neighbor Solar

Total Cost (estimated): \$250,000

Total Cost to County and City from this proposal: \$0

Matching Funds: \$250,000 (ARPA City and County)

Through City and County ARPA allocations, 20 eligible low income households will receive a no-cost, rooftop solar system. Slated for 13 additional systems through December 2024. We also continue to fundraise for this effort with our own events and donors and have secured an additional \$13,000 toward this program to-date.

Solarize Asheville-Buncombe 2024 with Solar Crowdsourcing

Total Cost (estimated): \$10,000

Total Cost to County and City: \$10,000

Matching Funds: 5% of solar installation costs goes to Solar Crowdsourcing, about \$250,000 in 2021.

GBA staff will coordinate outreach, logistics and support to recruit and publicize a new Solarize Campaign. By engaging with Solar Crowdsourcing again in 2024, GBA will be able to use a proven model to facilitate a





community-based group purchase program (i.e. Solarize), which will help reduce the cost of solar and make clean, sustainable energy more available to community residents. The Solar Crowdsourcing platform offers a range of tools, features and educational programming that add capacity for community organizers employing Solarize programs to meet clean-energy and equity goals that are easily accessible, and help remove previous barriers to obtaining and investing in solar energy — all at no expense to the community. We will do our best to evolve the model from 2021 to include local solar installers.

#### Trades Education and Outreach - GBA Continuing Education

GBA already offers continuing education for contractors. This year, we hope to add additional classes that will give tradespeople knowledge about energy-saving technology so they can promote innovative energy-efficient appliances to their customers, improve access to rebate opportunities, and strengthen the contractor network for future initiatives.

We would have 6 classes about building science and in all of them there will be elements of using that information to access utility and IRA incentives for their businesses. One will specifically be about net-zero energy buildings, another about solar energy in buildings. We could also add 1 or 2 new classes, one for HVAC contractors on benefits of specification of high SEER and HSPF equipment and one on best practices for installing heat pump water heaters (we still need to identify instructors for these last two class options).

#### State-level advocacy Duke EE Collaborative

Being engaged as a participant in this group in FY23 directly led to starting Duke Energy Progress Weatherization tier 2 programming for low-income households. We wish to continue this work, as it could lead to additional resources for Buncombe County residents.

#### Pilot Purchase Campaign - Heat Pump Water Heaters

The Solarize campaign in 2021 served as a successful model for a potential heat pump water heater replacement program, however, we believe it would take \$70k per year to hire a staff member for this program to be successful. Such a program was proposed and championed by members of the BHP Community Council. It would aim to boost the use of heat pump water heaters in the community, reduce prices through bulk purchasing and tax credits, and contribute to the community's renewable energy goals. The program will be launched in 2024, and milestones include hiring a coordinator, forming an advisory group, identifying installation companies, securing bulk discounts, marketing the campaign, tracking adoption and energy savings, and ensuring long-term sustainability. **GBA continues to seek funding for this program, but it is not yet secured.** One potential funding pathway is the DOE Energy Future's grant. If we secure funding, it would be matching resources to this contract.

**d) Identify all subcontractors you intend to use for the proposed scope of work. For each subcontractor listed, proposers shall indicate 1.) What products and/or services are to be supplied by that subcontractor; 2) What experience the subcontractor has in working for communities from underserved populations and; 3.) What percentage of the overall scope of work that subcontractor will perform.**

Green Built Alliance only intends to partner with one subcontractor at this time:



#### Vandemusser Design PLLC

Vandemusser Design PLLC will be contracted for the measurement and verification of the Energy Savers Network Program, as has been completed in previous years. Headquartered in Asheville, NC, VandeMusser Design provides technical consulting and certification services for green residential construction to builders, architects, developers, and homeowners in Western North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia. This is the 4th report they will be producing for the program. At last year's price of \$12,000, this is 6 percent of the total contract.

Partnership and collaboration are going to be critical to our success. We intend to partner, or continue to partner, with the following organizations. These are not direct subcontractors, but they are critical multipliers to the work of this contract with the City and County.

#### Solar CrowdSource:

Solar Crowdsourcing is a platform that facilitates community-based group purchase programs (i.e. Solarize programs) that help reduce the cost of solar and make clean, sustainable energy more available to community residents. The Solar Crowdsourcing platform offers a range of tools, features and educational programming that add capacity for community organizers employing Solarize programs to meet clean-energy and equity goals that are easily accessible, and help remove previous barriers to obtaining and investing in solar energy — all at no expense to the community. Solar Crowdsourcing was the partner in the previous Solarize campaign.

United Community Development: UCD is well equipped to provide home repair services in our wrap-around programming for clients. We will hire UCD annually to provide safety, health and comfort improvements at client households, and help recruit additional families to the program. They will handle client recruitment, material purchasing and management, and project verification. While this is not directly awarded through this contract, these wrap-around services are offered to our clients as part of ESN messaging. This work is funded by the Dogwood Health Trust.

#### Referral Network

While not technically subcontractors, we have relationships with several companies and organizations where we refer our clients.

#### Low-income Weatherization:

- Community Action Opportunities for deeper retrofits

#### Home Repair:

- Mountain Housing Opportunities
- Council on Aging
- Habitat for Humanity

#### Moderate to High-income Energy Efficiency:



- Duke Energy programs such as Energy Wise Home, Home Energy House Call, and Smart Savers.
- Conservation Pros and EnergySmith Home Performance are two local companies specializing in air sealing and insulation.

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HVAC installers and contractors who specialize in efficient HVAC systems and who are approved as Duke Energy Trade Allies which allows clients to obtain Smart Saver rebates

Commercial Energy Efficiency:

- Land of Sky Waste Reduction Partners for commercial and nonprofit energy audits
- Duke Energy Small Business Smart Saver, Alesha Reardon, one of our board members, works in this program, which makes connections and referrals simple.

Solar Energy Companies:

There are many local installers who have years of experience doing residential and commercial solar and battery systems and who will be integral to the process of adopting 100% renewable energy.

We receive client referrals from the following organizations:

- Eblen Charities
- Buncombe County Community Engagement
- Homeward Bound
- Council on Aging

**Section E) List at least 3 client references public and/or private of similar size for whom you have provided services in the past three years. Provide telephone numbers and contact names for references.**

Michelle Myers

Chair of the Blue Horizons Community Council  
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Keith Bamberger

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Certified Environmental Educator  
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North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality



J Hackett

Reverend and former ED of Green Opportunities. Owner of The Grind coffee shop  
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We also are providing letters and quotes from clients and volunteers below:

**ESN Weatherization Testimonials**

“Energy savers network came out and helped weatherize our home, and we couldn’t be happier with the work they did. Everyone was kind and helpful. It’s incredible knowing that this service exists and I would highly recommend it to anyone needing help improving energy efficiency in their home.” -Jesse Iaquinto

“The master bedroom would get extremely warm when running the heat and the back of the home stayed cold! None of the rooms got warm... After the Energy Savers Network came by and did quite some work, I now have heat all throughout my home! So thankful especially for my children!” -Dionna Staley

**Dogwood Health Trust Home Repair Testimonial**

“I would like to thank everyone involved in this program. I am so grateful for Green Built and Energy Savers. Tony was so nice and knowledgeable about my porch. He answered all my questions without hesitation. He assisted me with some siding I asked him about. Being a single mom with a single mom income I am so grateful to know there are some nice people in the world willing to help. Tony, thank you for such a great job and personality.” -Rolanda Roberts

**ESN Volunteer Testimonial**

“We just get better and better at doing our job together. Everybody works to help each other on this crew whether you’re a paid leader or volunteer like I am. It feels really good to give back and see immediate results. I stay on week after week because it’s great working with committed people. We teach each other and get better. We’re starting another year. Last year in 2022 I worked on 29 homes. It feels great!” -Lew Gelfond, has completed over 500 volunteer hours

**Section F) Provide specific costs for each service proposed**

Our total proposal request to the County and City is \$233,800 per year. Costs for materials and labor continue to rise due to inflation and the need to retain high quality staff. We will continue to fundraise to meet the gap, as evinced in leveraged resources below. And additional funding from this contract (beyond what the costs have been for the past three years) will be essential in implementing the scope outlined in the RFP.



The tables below are excerpts from the [projection spreadsheet available on Google Drive](#).

This table provides requested funding for each main program for FY 24.

	<b>Direct Funding Request</b>	<b>Secured leveraged resources</b>	<b>Other Source</b>
<b>Residential weatherization initiatives</b>			
ESN Weatherization Services (200 homes at \$850/home)	\$120,000	\$50,000	Dogwood Health Trust
Program Evaluation	\$12,000		
<u>Leveraged programs</u>			
Home repairs for health and safety		\$100,000	Dogwood Health Trust
Other home repairs		\$35,000	Duke Energy Helping Home Fund
Tier 1 and 2 weatherization (insulation, duct sealing, etc)		\$60,000	Duke Energy Weatherization Program
Heating system replacement & Neighbor to Neighbor Solar Installs		\$180,000	City (2026) and County (2025) ARPA \$500k total
Apprenticeship program		\$20,000	*Unsecured funding
<b>Blue Horizons Project Community Council Coordination</b>	\$30,000		
<b>Community Engagement Program</b>	\$63,800		
<b>Educational programming for local contractors</b>		\$10,000	GBA unrestricted funds
<b>Pilot group purchase campaign: Solarize</b>	\$10,000		
<u>Leveraged programs</u>			
Heat pump water heater crowdsource program [not secured]		\$70,000	*Unsecured - Unidentified/DOE Energy Futures
<b>Total Funds Needed</b>	<b>\$235,800</b>	<b>\$525,000</b>	<b>\$760,800</b>

### Three year budget projections:

\*\*Bold indicates our direct funding request in this proposal

	<b>PY24</b>	<b>PY25</b>	<b>PY26</b>
<b>ESN Weatherization Services (200 homes at \$850/home)</b>	\$170,000	\$255,000	\$340,000



<b>Program Evaluation</b>	\$12,000	\$13,000	\$14,000
<u>Wrap Around Services for ESN Clients (leveraged dollars)</u>			
Home repairs for health and safety (Dogwood)	\$100,000	\$100,000	
Other home repairs (Duke Healthy Homes)	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
Duke Tier 1 and 2 weatherization (insulation, duct sealing, etc)	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
Heating system replacement & Neighbor to Neighbor Solar Installs	\$180,000	\$160,000	\$160,000
Apprenticeship program	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Blue Horizons Project Community Council Coordination	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$40,000
<b>Community Engagement Program</b>	\$63,800	\$75,000	\$80,000
<b>Educational programming for local contractors</b>	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
<b>Pilot group purchase campaign: Solarize</b>	\$10,000		
<b>Heat pump water heater crowdfsource program [not secured]</b>	\$70,000	\$70,000	
<b>Total Funds Needed</b>	<b>\$760,800</b>	<b>\$833,000</b>	<b>\$759,000</b>

### Program Budget Overview:

Community Engagement Program, [based on the plan](#) drafted with the BHPCC Community Engagement Committee.

Task	Estimated Cost	Notes
Create a 30-second version of an updated BHP video to replace the 3:30-min version on the website by the end of 2023.	\$ 3,000.00	Outside hire
Upgrades to BHP website layout, design, content (including automated customer journey directing them to appropriate resources)	\$ 2,000.00	
Because BHP is a Green Built Alliance program, work with a local graphic designer to update and better align the BHP logo with GBA branding by adding a leaf (on or near the sun) and possibly adding similar colors by the end of 2023.	\$ 1,500.00	Outside hire
When there is news to share, promote it on the BHP website, through BHP's digital media platforms and	\$ 750.00	Assuming 10 accounts of earned media



directly to local media outlets and key reporters to garner media interviews and secure earned media coverage. Also create a running list of partner organizations and individuals that engage with diverse communities and promote news and events through their existing channels.		
Run at least 1 local print ad and 1 local radio ad semi-annually to showcase equitable, clean energy progress in the region and promote the community climate challenge and/or countywide event (see below).	\$ 2,000.00	\$500 per ad
Lead and manage a month long, peer-to-peer community climate challenge, where people sign up to track and submit their climate-friendly actions on a weekly basis.		Staff time
With partners who share similar goals and objectives, plan and host – or co-host – at least 1 annual climate action-focused, countywide event that could include: Prominent speakers, such as elected officials from the City and County, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community leaders, etc., including a live Q&A. Expo booth showcasing a diverse array of private and public entities working to advance a just, clean energy future. Award ceremony recognizing the top, most impactful local clean energy projects and companies of the year. Eco-friendly prize raffle for residents who actively participated in the community climate challenge. Live music from a well-known local band.	\$ 12,000.00	Estimated first year event cost based on Earth Day 5K expenses (cash & staff time)
Engage the equity focus group to conduct research and interviews with communities missing from previous engagement strategies.		Staff time to manage group or contractor hire. Equity stipend (child care, flat payment, etc) for group members
Conduct an annual environmental justice survey to better understand the unique needs and challenges of communities experiencing disproportionate environmental harms and risks. Promote survey		Staff time (+ survey software cost?)



findings within vulnerable communities to educate and engage residents in programs that help lower the energy burden, such as GBA's Energy Savers Network.		
Participate in and conduct outreach at least 10 relevant, local community events, speaking engagements, festivals, fairs, farmer's markets, and other forums per quarter, including BHP presentations to community groups, churches, non-profit organizations, and businesses. Ensure Community Council members represent BHP by attending at least one GBA event per year. Engage community members in the planning process to help ensure events are relevant and effective.	\$ 6,000.00	\$600 per event
Social Media: Increase engagement with BHP's digital media platforms by 5% quarterly, from a July 1, 2022, baseline, for a 20% cumulative increase across all platforms annually by: Cast a wide net to reach Buncombe County and Asheville residents and businesses using culturally relevant, inclusive language, hashtags, and visuals on an array of digital media platforms, including BHP's website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, email newsletters, and paid digital advertisements. Promoting relevant articles, blog posts, op-eds, community climate challenge highlights and resources.	\$ 11,700.00	<a href="#">FY23 social media budget (newsletter, Facebook, Instagram line items 8,9,12) plus website redesign</a>
Spotlighting at least 1 impactful clean energy project (e.g., solar, wind, electrification, microgrid, geothermal, storage, etc.) per month with an equity lens by telling stories from the people leading and benefitting from the project, including BIPOC communities.	\$ 1,200.00	\$100 per post
Posting before, during and/or after relevant events, including key takeaways.	\$ 750.00	\$25 per post, 3 posts per event
Producing and promoting at least 1 Home Energy Advice video per quarter.	\$ 2,400.00	\$600 per video
Sharing and boosting important news and announcements with targeted, digital	\$ 500.00	FY23 social media ad budget





advertisements.		
Engage BHPCC and staff in job training with the Energy Savers Network summer apprentice program, which focuses on youth, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ communities.	\$ 20,000.00	2023 budget
Achieving the goals laid out in the BHP Strategic Plan requires significantly more community engagement than current staffing will allow. This extended effort will need to come from a combination of additional funding and expanded volunteer efforts from the BHPCC and those wanting greater involvement to achieve the local energy transition.		Staff time and swag for volunteer engagement (shirts, hoodies, hats, stickers?)
The BHP will track awareness, engagement, and action for each of the relevant initiatives listed above to develop a baseline throughout the year. Key performance indicators (KPIs) will then be developed for all relevant initiatives by the end of 2023, aligning with contracts the BHP has in place with the City and County. The BHP will use the KPIs to evaluate performance and adjust, as necessary, on a semi-annual basis.		Staff time on tracking estimated 2 hours per month
Meet the additional outreach and performance goals laid out in BHP contract.		
	<b>\$ 63,800.00</b>	<b>Totals</b>

Energy Savers Network Costs:

<b>2023 projections</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Direct Staff Cost	\$141,810.31
Indirect Staff Costs	\$13,454.22
Total Staff Cost	\$155,264.53
Material Costs	\$33,624.36
Total cost	\$170,000.00
Cost per home	\$850.00



Section G) Each Vendor shall submit with its proposal the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) with authority to bind the firm and answer questions or provide clarification concerning the firm's proposal.

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