

# Buncombe Rental Assistance Collaborative (BRAC)

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*RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds*

## ***Thrive Asheville***

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Kate Pett  
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Asheville, North Carolina 28806

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O: 828-989-7990

## ***Kate Pett***

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# Application Form

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## Question Group

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Buncombe County requests proposals for projects to help the community recover from and respond to COVID-19 and its negative economic impacts.

Buncombe County has been awarded \$50,733,290 in Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (Recovery Funding), as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. To date, Buncombe County has awarded projects totaling \$23,093,499, leaving a balance of \$27,639,791 available to award.

Visit <http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding> for details.

This infusion of federal resources is intended to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery.

Buncombe County is committed to investing these funds in projects that:

- Align to county strategic plan and community priorities
- Support equitable outcomes for most impacted populations
- Leverage and align with other governmental funding sources
- Make best use of this one-time infusion of resources
- Have a lasting impact

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP and any addenda issued hereto.

[Click here for the full terms and conditions of the RFP](#)

## Organization Type\*

Nonprofit

## Nonprofit documentation

If nonprofit, attach IRS Determination Letter or other proof of nonprofit status.

[Thrive 501 \(c\) 3 Determination Letter.pdf](#)

## Name of Project.\*

Buncombe Rental Assistance Collaborative (BRAC)

## New/Updated Proposal\*

Is this a new project proposal or an updated version of a proposal submitted during the earlier (July 2021) Recovery Funding RFP?

New project proposal

## Amount of Funds Requested\*

\$474,000.00

## Category\*

Please select one:

- Affordable Housing
- Aging/Older Adults
- Business Support/Economic Development
- Environmental/Climate
- Homelessness
- K-12 Education
- Infrastructure and/or Broadband
- Mental Health/Substance Use
- NC Pre-K Expansion
- Workforce

Affordable Housing

## Brief Project Description\*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

Thrive Asheville requests \$474,000 to lead the Buncombe Rental Assistance Collaborative, BRAC, a collaboration of six partner agencies, which will move 219 individuals/families with federal rental assistance (FRA) over two years. BRAC will make substantial improvements in the current approaches to accessing FRA and increase future acceptance of FRA by landlords in Buncombe County.

Currently, the use of FRA as a tool for accessing affordable housing is a patchwork of agency efforts, where funds are used inefficiently and little data is collected about what is working and what is not. Leveraging more than \$3 million in otherwise untapped federal rental assistance funding, BRAC will create lasting change by developing a successful and sustainable model for matching agencies, landlords, and tenants. As a result, this one-time infusion of resources will result in increased acceptance of FRA for the long term, helping to achieve the County's goal of 1,500 affordable rentals.

## Project Plan\*

Explain how the project will be structured and implemented, including timeframe.

BRAC will create a high-functioning ecosystem to ensure that federal rental assistance (FRA) is utilized effectively, becomes widely accepted, and moves tenants to long-term housing stability.

Agency Support & Collaboration - BRAC's approach will build shared agency standards of service, shared data, and a common evaluation plan. A tenant education curriculum and better-supported caseworkers will utilize best practices so tenants are more successful. Landlord satisfaction will increase - changing the narrative on FRA and increasing the availability of affordable units in the future.

Landlord Recruitment & Navigation - The Landlord Navigator (LN) will design community education and recruitment tools, providing landlords with easy-to-access information about accepting FRA. This staff person will recruit new landlords, match them with the best-fit agency & population, and guide them to the agency's Landlord Liaison to be paired with a tenant - streamlining a challenging system.

Tenant Education - The Lead Tenant Educator (LTE) will develop a tenant readiness curriculum that supports tenants from all agencies and reduces landlord-tenant conflicts. The LTE will provide quarterly direct instruction to all BRAC tenants. The LTE will provide ongoing training/support for agency-level tenant caseworkers who will tailor the curriculum to their population's needs.

Financial Incentives and Indemnification - Financial incentives are needed to offset a variety of costs to landlords. Modest financial incentives will offset landlords' expenses related to time spent on program enrollment, lost rent due to extended vacancies while holding for appropriate tenants, and significant lost income due to FRA-market rate gaps. We have structured BRAC's financial incentives to level the playing field among populations and to leverage existing financial incentives currently available from the Asheville Housing Authority, Homeward Bound, and Thrive Asheville's Landlord-Tenant Partnership. Indemnification will share the burden of risk among landlords who are assisting the community in meeting affordable housing goals.

### Year I -

- Develop BRAC - MOUs, shared standards of service, data collection tools
- Hire Landlord Navigator & Lead Tenant Educator
- Develop engaging public-facing website
- Design landlord & tenant curricula
- Launch community education & landlord recruitment
- Indemnification period begins
- Lease up 94 units
- Hold direct tenant education
- Provide technical support for agency liaisons for landlords & tenants
- Collect YR I data, review, adjust, improve - produce a formative report

### Years II & III -

- Provide ongoing support to tenants, landlords, and agencies
- Lease up 125 units by 6/30/24
- Conduct landlord satisfaction survey and tenant quality of life survey annually
- Collect YR II data, review, adjust, improve - produce a formative report
- No new units, indemnification ends 12/31/25
- Collect YR III data - produce a summative report

## Statement of Need\*

Describe the need that this project will address. Include data to demonstrate the need, and cite the source of the data.

In Buncombe County, hundreds of adults and children cannot access affordable housing because landlords will not accept federal rental assistance (FRA). Millions of dollars of federal funding for affordable housing go unused each year. Our community's affordable housing stock is declining as landlords choose to sell rather than rent. These challenges can be solved - and hundreds of people provided with housing where they can thrive - through a coordinated program of agency, landlord, and tenant support.

BRAC partners and a landlord focus group identified these barriers to FRA acceptance:

1) Negative stereotypes & past bad experiences reduce landlords' willingness to accept FRA Limited staffing and siloed work of competing agencies have resulted in poor landlord-tenant matches. Landlords need to be guided to the best-fit population for their units, and tenants need tools and support to succeed in new settings.

2) A lengthy & complex process to FRA acceptance

Landlords need nearly immediate customer service because they expect to fill vacancies quickly. In our tight rental market, vacancies are filled in a day and landlords have their choice of highly competitive applicants. Accepting FRA is a multi-step and often delayed process. Landlords need a consistent, accessible guide to explain and expedite the process.

3) Accepting FRA is not profitable

The Asheville Citizen-Times reported the local two-bedroom apartment costs \$1,914/month. 2022 HACA vouchers provide \$1,588/month for a two-bedroom unit - a cost to landlords of \$326/month. As a result, it is much more profitable to rent to a private-pay tenant or sell the unit.

Addressing one of the issues without the others will further the negative experiences of landlords and tenants and perpetuate low levels of FRA acceptance. This proposal is comprehensive, designed to address all barriers, and realize the potential of FRA to assist vulnerable tenants in moving to greater long-term housing security.

## Link to COVID-19\*

Identify a health or economic harm resulting from or exacerbated by the public health emergency, describe the nature and extent of that harm, and explain how the use of this funding would address such harm.

The effects of Covid-19 have been disproportionately dire for people already disadvantaged in Buncombe County before the pandemic. Access to safe and secure housing is a prerequisite for recovery for these groups.

-Two-fifths of recently surveyed unhoused individuals said that the pandemic caused them to lose a job or reduced their income. For many without employment, this further delayed their opportunity to find income-earning opportunities. Additionally, unhoused individuals were left out of many recovery interventions including stimulus checks received as part of the CARES ACT.

-The pandemic has created a spike in domestic violence which has forced adults and children to seek alternative housing opportunities. With shelters overwhelmed, survivors are facing the prospect of homelessness in historic numbers.

-Access to stable healthcare is critical for people living with HIV/AIDS. Many HIV/AIDS survivors report that they have missed medication doses or appointments as a result of the conditions created by the pandemic. This population is more likely to be Black and Brown, and living in poverty.

-Families and individuals living in concentrated poverty in our community tend to be Black and Brown, and tend to be more remotely located from services and transportation that would support their health and well-being. As a result, they have experienced higher levels of disease and death.

Based on past recessions and recoveries, it is likely that without strategic and targeted support, vulnerable communities will be the last to recover from the pandemic, if they ever do. These groups should be prioritized in receiving targeted support for this recovery. BRAC is proposing a comprehensive approach to make substantial tangible gains for the most vulnerable members of our county through increased access to affordable housing. This lays the groundwork for a long-term more equitable recovery and identifies a strategic approach to help address equity gaps in housing.

## Population Served\*

Define the population to be served by this project, including volume and demographic characteristics of those served.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a nonpartisan research and policy institute, federal rental assistance (FRA) makes housing affordable for millions of people in the United States.

Although the clients served by each of the agencies in BRAC vary in demographics, they are uniformly vulnerable, low-income, experiencing bias, and using FRA to access safe housing. This proposal's strategy to increase community-level staffing and access to equitable financial incentives for landlords across all agencies over the next two years will allow each of the following populations to be served more effectively.

Thrive Asheville will empower up to 40 families to move out of public housing communities, where poverty is concentrated, to neighborhoods with greater access to services and lower concentrations of poverty. These families, in previous iterations of Thrive's work, have been primarily women of color and all have had children who will experience greater life outcomes as a result of these moves.

Homeward Bound will house 70 individuals and families in units accepting FRA. Clients of Homeward Bound are all currently or formerly homeless and the majority are living with disabilities. Many are aging adults and a significant portion are BIPOC.

Helpmate will house 42 individuals and families in units accepting FRA and all will be survivors of domestic violence.

The Veterans Association Supportive Housing program will house up to 70 individuals and families in units accepting FRA and all will be veterans experiencing homelessness. Many of these clients are aging adults and are living with disabilities.

The Western North Carolina AIDS Project will house 17 individuals and families in units accepting FRA and all will be clients living with HIV/AIDS.

Based on past experience, of 219 total cases, we are likely to serve at least 117 BIPOC individuals, 112 disabled persons, 46 elderly individuals, and 133 hard-to-house or homeless individuals.

## Results\*

Describe the proposed impact of the project. List at least 3 performance measures that will be tracked and reported. If possible, include baselines and goals for each performance measure.

Currently, the use of FRA as a tool for accessing affordable housing is a patchwork of agency efforts, with little data collected, and no data-sharing about what works best for landlords and tenants. Key measurements that would inform community spending, landlord acceptance, and ensure greater long-term tenant success remain unknowable currently. Thrive Asheville and our partners will create a lasting change in the levels of landlord acceptance of FRA by increasing the quality of support for landlords and tenants.

### Result

#1 - 80% of tenants will successfully complete a tenant readiness curriculum that results in reduced tenant-landlord conflict, and as a result, successfully fulfill the lease terms and demonstrate improved long-term stability.

Baseline: No agencies currently provide tenant readiness training that would proactively address frequent challenges that arise for tenants in new housing settings.

#2 - 80% of landlords will renew for a second year with the program, signaling improved landlord experiences and satisfaction, and resulting in greater long-term tenant housing stability.

Baseline: This data point is unknowable at this time because there is no system for collecting data across agencies in Buncombe County. Improving the acceptance rate of FRA in Buncombe County can be considered a success when the program retains a landlord accepting FRA.

#3 - 80% of tenants surveyed report an improved quality of life, including greater access to supportive services as a result of more stable housing conditions.

Baseline: Currently the long-term impact of accessing FRA to promote tenant success is unknowable. Accessing affordable housing with FRA is a means to an end of promoting a higher quality of life and long-term success of tenants.

#4 - Community leaders, landlords, and tenants will understand and be able to build upon the short- and long-term results of increased FRA acceptance through centralized data collection, analysis, and reporting.

## Evaluation\*

Describe the data collection, analysis, and quality assurance measures you will use to assure ongoing, effective tracking of contract requirements and outcomes.

Improving the FRA process takes on real urgency now, with our extremely tight housing market and the prospect for dramatically diminished availability of affordable rental units.

Level of service BRAC will provide to Buncombe County:

#### Agency-level -

10 tenant caseworker training sessions will be led by the Lead Tenant Educator  
10 landlord liaison training sessions will be led by the Landlord Navigator

#### Community-level -

219 individuals and families access stable housing through FRA acceptance  
30 new units of housing are accessed in multifamily housing units  
75 landlords accept FRA for the first time and join the FRA program  
100 units are accessed with FRA for the first time  
6 public-facing affordable housing events focused on FRA  
2 annual publications for elected officials, agency leaders, and developers on the use of FRA

#### Quality of service and supports for stakeholders -

80% of landlords renew for multiple years  
80% of landlords report that they felt well-supported in the process of accepting FRA; that they had someone to support them with challenges; that they would recommend the program to others  
80% of tenants participating in basic tenant readiness report that the training was helpful in meeting landlord expectations, maintaining housing units, and succeeding in new setting.

Tenants in BRAC will be better off because:

80% of tenants attend basic tenant readiness trainings offered by LTE  
80% of tenants remain in the same unit after the first year lease ends

80% of tenants indicate improved satisfaction/quality of life survey

## Equity Impact\*

How will this effort help build toward a just, equitable, and sustainable COVID-19 recovery? How are the root causes and/or disproportionate impacts of inequities addressed?

Creating supported and effective pathways to affordable rentals in partnership with Buncombe County agencies and residents using Federal Rental Assistance (FRA) is a critical step in building a community that is just, equitable, and sustainable. Long-term and concentrated poverty, unstable housing, and a lack of access to services have been disproportionately impacting communities of color, the elderly, and those living with chronic illness, disability, or in unsafe conditions, long before the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to strengthen our community through recovery, it is imperative that we acknowledge the ways in which this pandemic has exacerbated those inequities, and invest in strategies that take history into account.

BRAC is focused on deconcentrating poverty and prioritizing solutions that are equitable across populations and partner agencies, to not only address the impacts of COVID-19 but to create lasting change. Prioritizing safe, stable, and affordable housing, allows residents to more easily address other barriers that perpetuate inequities and trap people in poverty, like mental and physical healthcare, childcare, and access to supportive services.

Simply addressing the acceptance of FRA by private-market landlords does not ensure the housing stability that is necessary for this community to reduce concentrated poverty - support to both tenants and landlords is the only way to realize the full potential of this kind of investment. Two additional staff positions focused on educating landlords and tenants, and building strong and equitable relationships, will enhance the powerful work that is already happening in our community to create long-term success. By taking a systemic approach to increasing FRA acceptance, we will ensure that these moves to greater housing stability are lasting and yield increased success in life and for our Buncombe County community.

## Project Partners\*

Identify any subcontractors you intend to use for the proposed scope of work. For each subcontractor listed, indicate:

- 1.) What products and/or services are to be supplied by that subcontractor and;
- 2.) What percentage of the overall scope of work that subcontractor will perform.

Also, list non-funded key partners critical to project.

Thrive Asheville's mission is to collaborate with residents and leaders from diverse perspectives to understand our city's challenges, forge new relationships, and act on the best solutions together. As the backbone organizing agency directing this collaborative effort, Thrive Asheville will engage five additional partners to implement an affordable housing solution that aligns with Buncombe County's strategic goals, weaves together multiple sources of funding, reaches a range of populations, and efficiently uses resources to have a lasting impact for those most housing insecure in our community.

BRAC, led by Thrive Asheville, includes Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina (HB), the Western North Carolina AIDS Project (WNCAP), Helpmate, the VA Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH), and The Housing Authority of the City of Asheville (HACA). Additional support, collaboration, and funding comes from City of Asheville Community Development.

This group of agencies has convened to work more effectively together, build stronger and lasting relationships between landlords and tenants using federal rental assistance (FRA), and increase the acceptance of FRA community-wide. BRAC partners met three times, and many more times in smaller groups,



to develop this proposal. These partners will develop shared standards of service, participate in hiring two new staff positions providing support and capacity to all agencies involved, and evaluate the effectiveness of a set of uniform practices and incentives as well as indemnification for landlords. Not only will this partnership build each agency's capacity to better serve their clients, but it will also strengthen interagency communication and relationships in the often-competitive non-profit industry.

Thrive Asheville will manage all funds of this ARPA proposal. Thrive, HACA, and HB will add directly to the financial resources of this project by making payments from existing sources of funding at their agencies.

## Capacity\*

Describe the background, experience, and capabilities of your organization or department as it relates to capacity for delivering the proposed project and managing federal funds.

BRAC partners have vast experience moving people with federal rental assistance (FRA) to safer housing. BRAC also has the experience to manage and layer ARPA funds with existing resources to achieve the proposed outcomes.

The Landlord Navigator & Lead Tenant Educator, employed by Thrive Asheville, will be selected by a hiring team including representatives of BRAC. The diversity of experts on this team will ensure that high-quality candidates can meet the needs of diverse client populations. Thrive Asheville's executive director Kate Pett has decades of experience managing staff members, as well as government funding.

BRAC leaders will meet quarterly to track data and assign financial incentives & indemnification payments.

Landlords will access financial incentives directly from agencies that offer them - HACA, Homeward Bound, and the Landlord-Tenant Partnership (total # agency-paid incentives - 140). The remaining financial incentives will be paid by ARPA funds managed by Thrive Asheville (# ARPA-paid incentives- 79). Thrive Asheville allocated 15 incentives in 2021, so this increase to 40 incentives annually will require modest increases in fiscal management capacity which we are prepared to meet. HACA and Homeward Bound have developed systems for managing the payments at the levels above.

Indemnification payments will be awarded as reimbursement for damages beyond normal wear. The amount of indemnification is based on past experiences of the partner agencies. Well-established processes at HACA and Homeward Bound will serve as the model for BRAC's approach. HACA and Homeward Bound will manage a first layer of indemnification for the landlords serving their clients, and Thrive will add a layer of indemnification for other landlords and agencies.

This is a substantial request for a new organization with a short financial history. We will work creatively to structure full/partial funding reimbursement to meet the County's expectations.

## Budget\*

Provide a detailed project budget including all proposed project revenues and expenditures, including explanations and methodology. For all revenue sources, list the funder and denote whether funds are confirmed or pending. For project expenses, denote all capital vs. operating costs, and reflect which specific expenses are proposed to be funded with one-time Buncombe County Recovery Funds.

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.

Thrive Asheville BRAC Budget.xlsx

## Special Considerations\*

Provide any other information that might assist the County in its selection.

Thrive Asheville LOS (1).pdf

Please find attached letters of support from Helpmate, The Western North Carolina AIDS Project, and Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina - partners in the BRAC project. These letters not only speak to the unified values and goals of those involved with BRAC, but also support Thrive Asheville's ability to manage these ARPA funds and organize this collaborative effort.

BRAC partners plan to create sustainability through agency cost-sharing and shared fundraising going forward.

Indemnification Funds Explained

For this proposal, we have made a conservative estimate of 20% of units needing to access indemnification funds, but based on the LTP experience and the input of BRAC partners, this estimate is high. We believe that despite this conservative figure, it is important to have access to these funds in the full amount so that appropriate data can be collected and no further negative stereotypes around FRA programs in our community can be perpetuated.

Thrive Asheville has learned, from experience with the Landlord-Tenant Partnership (LTP) program, that these funds serve to provide peace of mind. Thrive Asheville set aside \$37,500 in indemnification funds for 25 units in the City of Asheville during the pilot period of the LTP. To date, having leased-up 23 new units, only \$6,500 has been used to address damages well above normal wear and tear. When combined with increased tenant support, better matching of landlords with programs, and the involvement of agency-specific landlord liaisons, as BRAC is proposing, these funds likely would not be used in their entirety. We believe a significant amount of this request could be returned to Buncombe County, or reallocated to serve as landlord incentives payments for a third year. These additional units would not be indemnified, but they would be additional affordable rentals. We propose to end the indemnification period on 12/31/2025 to allow funds to be completely spent by December, 2026.

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- Thrive 501 (c) 3 Determination Letter.pdf
- Thrive Asheville BRAC Budget.xlsx
- Thrive Asheville LOS (1).pdf



Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service  
Tax Exempt and Government Entities  
P.O. Box 2508  
Cincinnati, OH 45201

THRIVE ASHEVILLE INC  
15 WESTGATE ROAD  
ASHEVILLE, NC 28806

Date:  
09/15/2021  
Employer ID number:  
87-1110868  
Person to contact:  
Name: Customer Service  
ID number: 31954  
Telephone: (877) 829-5500  
Accounting period ending:  
June 30  
Public charity status:  
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)  
Form 990 / 990-EZ / 990-N required:  
Yes  
Effective date of exemption:  
May 28, 2021  
Contribution deductibility:  
Yes  
Addendum applies:  
No  
DLN:  
26053635002661

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to [www.irs.gov/charities](http://www.irs.gov/charities). Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Martin  
Director, Exempt Organizations  
Rulings and Agreements

















# Helpmate

Domestic Violence Advocacy

**SAFETY. SHELTER. SUPPORT.**

P.O. Box 2263, Asheville, NC 28802

HelpmateOnline.org

828-254-2968

Hotline: 828-254-0516

April 8, 2022

Dear County Commissioners and County Staff,

Helpmate is pleased to participate in Thrive Asheville's proposed work to implement a collective impact strategy to increase the acceptance of federal rental assistance (FRA) in this community. The collaborative effort of six local organizations will address the need for more access to affordable rental units across a wide range of populations including families living in public housing, chronically homeless individuals, survivors of domestic violence, veterans, and people living with HIV/AIDS. The combination of financial incentives for landlords willing to accept FRA with the critical support of two new staff positions at Thrive will create an ecosystem where organizations and those they are serving can thrive.

Thrive Asheville has a successful track record for convening housing partners and advancing solutions. Over the last two years, Thrive Asheville's Landlord-Tenant Partnership has knit together funders like the Dogwood Health Trust and the City of Asheville with coaches, landlords, tenants, and the Asheville Housing Authority to successfully move 46 families to more stable affordable housing. Thrive Asheville is proposing to lead a collaboration of six partner organizations to dramatically improve the process and rate of federal rental assistance (FRA) acceptance by landlords, capture 219 affordable units for housing, and place significantly more vulnerable individuals and families into secure housing using this strategy.

When a domestic violence survivor chooses to leave their abusive partner, access to emergency shelter and housing that is safe and affordable are significant barriers as they work to rebuild after trauma. Unfortunately, domestic violence remains a leading cause of homelessness among women and children. Helpmate is excited to partner with Thrive on this initiative as part of our work to ensure safety, shelter and support for domestic violence survivors in Buncombe County.

Sincerely,

April Burgess-Johnson

Executive Director



April 8, 2022

Dear Buncombe County Commissioners and County Staff,

On behalf of Western North Carolina AIDS Project (WNCAP), I am pleased to offer my strong support of Thrive Asheville's proposal to access Buncombe County's COVID Recovery Funding in order to implement a collective impact strategy to increase the acceptance of federal rental assistance (FRA) in this community. The collaborative effort of six local agencies will offer a groundbreaking strategy to make a permanent and measurable difference in homelessness in Asheville and Buncombe County.

This collaboration will increase affordable rental units for a wide range of populations including families living in public housing, chronically homeless individuals, survivors of domestic violence, veterans, and people living with HIV/AIDS. The standardization of financial incentives for landlords willing to accept FRA and the critical support of two new staff positions, will offer a community-wide solution to the lack of available housing units.

WNCAP manages the regional contract for the HUD program, Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA), which provides people living with HIV tenant-based and short-term rental assistance. Last year, WNCAP placed 15 people in new housing units, nine of whom were previously houseless. HOPWA services are an essential component to overcoming homelessness for people living with HIV, and for reducing the overall number of people who are houseless in our community.

Thrive Asheville has a successful track record for convening housing partners and advancing solutions. Over the last two years, Thrive Asheville's Landlord-Tenant Partnership successfully moved 46 families to more stable affordable housing. Thrive Asheville is proposing to lead a collaboration of six partner agencies to dramatically improve the process of FRA acceptance, greatly increase the acceptance of FRA by landlords, and place significantly more vulnerable individuals and families into secure housing.

WNCAP is excited to partner with Thrive and collaborate with area housing providers on this initiative. It is only by working together will we find solutions needed to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. I encourage you to support this proposal.

Sincerely,

*Antonio Del Toro*

Antonio Del Toro  
Chief Executive Officer



April 11, 2022

Dear Buncombe County Commissioners and Staff,

On behalf of Homeward Bound of WNC, I am writing to express my strong support for Thrive Asheville's proposal to access Buncombe County's COVID Recovery Funding in order to implement a collective impact strategy to increase the acceptance of federal rental assistance (FRA) in this community. The collaborative effort of six local agencies will address the need for more affordable rental units across a wide range of populations including families living in public housing, chronically homeless individuals, survivors of domestic violence, veterans, and people living with HIV/AIDS. The combination of financial incentives for landlords willing to accept FRA with the critical support of two new staff positions, will create the ecosystem where agencies and those they are serving can thrive.

Thrive Asheville has a successful track record for convening housing partners and advancing solutions. Over the last two years, Thrive Asheville's Landlord-Tenant Partnership has knit together funders like The Dogwood Health Trust and the City of Asheville with coaches, landlords, tenants, and the Asheville Housing Authority to successfully move 46 families to more stable affordable housing. Thrive Asheville is proposing to lead a collaboration of six partner agencies to dramatically improve the process of federal rental assistance (FRA) acceptance, greatly increase the acceptance of FRA by landlords, capture 219 affordable units for housing, and place significantly more vulnerable individuals and families into secure housing using this strategy.

As the lead agency providing permanent supportive housing to those who have experienced homelessness in Buncombe County, we have an extensive knowledge of the affordable housing resources, challenges, and best practices in our community. We commit to allocating staff and matching grant funds to maximize the impact of this collaborative effort.

Sincerely,

Cindy McMahon  
Interim Executive Director

