



POLK COUNTY

2022-2023

Annual Action Plan

**Amend. No. 1 adding ESG RUSH
Funded Activities – Amended Pages
To the 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan**

POLK COUNTY
Annual Action Plan
Oct. 1, 2022, to Sept. 30, 2023

Adopted: July 19, 2022



ESG RUSH Allocation FY2022/2024	12/29/2022
Entitlement	\$374,935
ESG RUSH TOTAL REVENUE	\$374,935.00
Administration 7.5%	\$28,120.11
Talbot House	\$82,271.63
The Salvation Army	\$82,271.63
MCSC Meeting Community Needs	\$50,000.00
Catholic Charities	\$82,271.63
HIMS	\$50,000.00
sub total	\$346,814.89
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$374,935.00
Difference	\$0.00

Executive Summary

AP-05 Executive Summary - 24 CFR 91.200(c), 91.220(b)

1. Introduction

Polk County receives annual federal grant allocations from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). Last year the County received HOME ARP funds as well. Polk County's Consolidated Plan is the five-year planning document required by HUD to identify priority needs and establish corresponding goals to address those needs. The Action Plan is the annual planning document identifying specific activities to be undertaken during the HUD Program Year 2022-2023 through the use of federally funded grants. The Five-Year Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan also consider other sources of state and local funding that may be used to support, match, or leverage federally funded grants. A state source of funding is Florida's State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program. Polk County's Consolidated Plan provides goals and coordinated strategies to address the housing and community needs of very low, low, and moderate-income residents. The preparation and administration of the Consolidated Plan offers opportunities to shape various programs into effective, coordinated neighborhood and community development strategies. The strategies become action-driven initiatives to foster positive changes. The planning process emphasizes creating an environment for strategic planning and citizen participation while reducing duplication of efforts at the local level. As part of the community needs assessment in preparation of the Consolidated Plan, County staff reached out to area community organizations and neighborhood groups; however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the opportunity for these types of meetings was limited. In-person meetings were held throughout the County along with three virtual meetings. Community surveys (hard copy and online) were distributed to gather more information on the needs and concerns of communities. Surveys and other citizen input indicate a need for: continuing infrastructure improvements including but not limited to drainage, roadway, and sidewalk improvements; providing access to high-speed internet; and providing access to neighborhood, special needs, and homeless services. Community feedback also reflected the desire to have safe, affordable housing.

2. Summarize the objectives and outcomes identified in the Plan

This could be a restatement of items, or a table listed elsewhere in the plan or a reference to another location. It may also contain any essential items from the housing and homeless needs assessment, the housing market analysis, or the strategic plan.

The Polk County Five Year 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan and 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan will continue to use CDBG, ESG, ESG RUSH (Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing), and HOME funds to address priority needs in very low, low, and moderate census block groups (target areas) across the County. Recently Polk County was awarded ESG Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) funds in the amount of \$374,935. These funds will be used for rapid rehousing for clients displaced by recent storms. In addition

Recently Polk County was awarded ESG Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) funds in the amount of \$374,935. These funds will be used for rapid rehousing rental assistance for clients displaced by recent storms.

Federal CDBG, HOME and ESG funds for the upcoming year are planned for the most cost-effective, targeted, and goal focused projects approved through Polk County's Citizen Participation Process . Polk County's 2022-2023 CDBG, HOME, and ESG federal grants begin October 1, 2022, and conclude September 30, 2023. HND staff believes that targeting improvement projects and funds for specific communities is an effective way to foster community revitalization. The coordinated targeted approach to investing in communities has been effective in various low-income neighborhoods in Polk County. This approach serves to maximize HND grants resources and evokes efforts to continually improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our individual and collective performance.

AP-10 Consultation – 91.100, 91.200(b), 91.215(l)

1. Introduction

The Polk County Housing and Neighborhood Development Office (HND) is strongly committed to obtaining input from all housing and social service provider partners. Each agency plays a role in the provision of services and assistance to very low-, low- and moderate-income residents. Throughout the five-year planning cycle, the County's goals and objectives are met in partnership with these agencies.

Provide a concise summary of the jurisdiction's activities to enhance coordination between public and assisted housing providers and private and governmental health, mental health, and service agencies (91.215(l))

Each year throughout the planning process Polk County Housing and Neighborhood Development Office coordinates with various private and nonprofit agencies whose missions are to assist in the provision of housing and social services, including mental health providers. These agencies focus their efforts on very low-, low- and moderate-income people. Additional consultations were conducted over the phone, through emails, and during one-on-one meetings with various agencies. During the 2022-2023 planning cycle Housing and Neighborhood Development staff attended various meetings to facilitate neighborhood planning for the Florence Villa/Boggy Bottom area, and the Wahneta Neighborhood of Polk County. Staff reviewed the planning process at the first public meeting conducted this year. Information about upcoming programs/projects were explained. HND staff members regularly attend neighborhood meetings.

Describe coordination with the Continuum of Care and efforts to address the needs of homeless persons (particularly chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans, and unaccompanied youth) and persons at risk of homelessness.

Recently Polk County was awarded ESG Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) funds in the amount of \$374,935. These funds will be used for rapid rehousing for clients displaced by recent storms. Recent needs were exacerbated by Hurricane Ian and Hurricane Nicole.

Polk County traditionally allocates \$30,000 annually for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) services and uses the majority of the ESG funding for homeless prevention, rapid rehousing, and a limited number of essential services for shelters. Program administration is 7.5% of the grant. The ESG program administration funds are used by Polk County HND. The funding allocated for HMIS services for the Continuum of Care (CoC) lead agency is used primarily for payroll and server equipment to keep the HMIS systems up to date. HND works closely with the CoC to determine how funds should be allocated within the CoC. The County has its own evaluation criteria for funds allocation, but the CoC works closely with us to provide information concerning provider capacity and performance to maximize use of funds. Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) and Point-in-time Survey (PIT) data for all providers are entered in the CoC

Other local/regional/state/federal planning efforts considered when preparing the Plan

Name of Plan	Lead Organization	How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan?
Continuum of Care	Homeless Coalition of Polk County	The Polk County Housing and Neighborhood Development Office works closely with the Homeless Coalition of Polk County and the Continuum of Care Provided to leverage federal and state funds to meet the affordable housing goals outlined in this plan.

Table 3 – Other local / regional / federal planning efforts

Narrative (optional)

Recently Polk County was awarded ESG Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) funds in the amount of \$374,935. These funds will be used for rapid rehousing for clients displaced by recent storms.

In preparing the Polk County 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan Housing & Neighborhood Development staff consulted with local stakeholders, such as the Public Housing Authorities, the Homeless Coalition of Polk County Continuum of Care membership, and local nonprofit agencies that support program goals and objectives when applying for public services funding. Because Polk County receives an ESG grant we work closely and consult with our Continuum of Care in determining how to allocate our ESG grant for eligible activities; in developing the performance standards for, and evaluating the outcomes of, projects and activities assisted by ESG funds; and in developing funding, policies, and procedures for the operation and administration of the HMIS.

Expected Resources

AP-15 Expected Resources – 91.220(c)(1,2)

Introduction

Polk County will receive a total of \$3,947,457 in CDBG funds, \$1,568,130 in HOME funds, \$5,105,519 in HOME-ARP funds, \$345,345 in ESG funds, and, which includes \$ 200,000 in anticipated program income from the CDBG program, and \$100,000 anticipated program income from the HOME program. These are yearly entitlement amounts and are used to estimate priorities over the next five- year period of this Consolidated Plan.

Anticipated Resources

Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
CDBG	public - federal	Acquisition Admin and Planning Economic Development Housing Public Improvements Public Services	3,947,457	200,000	0	4,147,457	12,083,625	Anticipated five-year average
HOME	public - federal	Acquisition Homebuyer assistance Homeowner rehab Multifamily rental new construction Multifamily rental rehab New construction for ownership TBRA	1,568,130	100,000	0	1,668,130	4,465,218	Anticipated five-year average

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Program	Source of Funds	Uses of Funds	Expected Amount Available Year 1				Expected Amount Available Remainder of ConPlan \$	Narrative Description
			Annual Allocation: \$	Program Income: \$	Prior Year Resources: \$	Total: \$		
ESG	public - federal	Conversion and rehab for transitional housing Financial Assistance Overnight shelter Rapid re-housing (rental assistance) Rental Assistance Services Transitional housing	345,345	0	25,000	370,345	1,007,821	Anticipated five-year average
ESG-RUSH	public - federal	Rapid re-housing (rental assistance) Rental Assistance and HMIS	374,935	0	0	374,935	374,935	
Other	public - federal	Multifamily rental rehab New construction for ownership Other	0	0	0	0	0	

Table 5 - Expected Resources – Priority Table

Explain how federal funds will leverage those additional resources (private, state, and local funds), including a description of how matching requirements will be satisfied

Recently Polk County was awarded ESG Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) funds in the amount of \$374,935. These funds will be used for rapid rehousing for clients displaced by recent storms.

Projects

AP-35 Projects – 91.220(d)

Introduction

The following projects were identified by the outcomes for citizen input at neighborhood meetings held by the Parks and Recreation Department, Roads and Drainage Division and one on one meetings held with County Social Services Offices. Additional input is gathered throughout the planning cycle via citizens phone calls and staff attendance at neighborhood meetings.

Projects

#	Project Name
1	CDBG Administration - 2022-2023
2	Neighborhood Improvements 2022-2023
3	CDBG Demolition and Clearance 2022-2023
4	CDBG Minor Repairs 2022-2023
5	CDBG TBRA Case Management for TBRA clients (HOME) 2022-2023
6	CDBG Municipal Partners Projects - 2022-2023
7	Public Services for 2022-2023
8	2022-2023 HOME Administration
9	2022-2023 HOME Demo/Reconstruction
10	2022-2023 CHDO New Construction SF Project
11	2022-2023 TBRA - Tenant Based Rental Assistance (HOME)
12	2022-2023 ESG RR/HP/SO and ESG-RUSH RR and Administration

Table 7 - Project Information

Describe the reasons for allocation priorities and any obstacles to addressing underserved needs

Recently Polk County was awarded ESG Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) funds in the amount of \$374,935. These funds will be used for rapid rehousing for clients displaced by recent storms.

Actions that will take place during the next year to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs are outlined as follows: Although the needs of the underserved far exceed the limited funding available to provide services, the County will continue investing CDBG, HOME, and ESG funds into neighborhoods for improvements that foster neighborhood viability and create suitable, safe living environments.

	Description	HOME funds will be used to assist approximately 54 elderly and/or disabled clients whose income is at or below 50% of the area median income
	Target Date	
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	it is estimated that 54 elderly and/or disabled clients will benefit from the TBRA program using these HOME funds.
	Location Description	Scattered site countywide
	Planned Activities	Rental assistance for elderly and/or disable clients
	Project Name	2022-2023 ESG RR/HP/SO Administration and ESG RUSH RR
	Target Area	Countywide
	Goals Supported	Affordable Housing Suitable Living Environment/Quality of Life Expanding Economic Opportunities/Self Sufficiency
	Needs Addressed	Affordable Housing Homelessness
	Funding	ESG: \$345,345 + ESG RUSH \$374,935 = \$720,280
	Description	Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds have been budgeted to assist with Rapid Rehousing, homeless prevention, and shelter operations
	Target Date	9/29/2023
	Estimate the number and type of families that will benefit from the proposed activities	It is estimated that 194 homeless people will benefit from these activities
	Location Description	Countywide
13	Planned Activities	Homeless prevention, Rapid Rehousing, Shelter Operations
	Project Name	2022-2023 Public Facilities Grants for Nonprofits - CDBG
	Target Area	Countywide
	Goals Supported	Affordable Housing Suitable Living Environment/Quality of Life Expanding Economic Opportunities/Self Sufficiency

If the PHA is designated as troubled, describe the manner in which financial assistance will be provided or other assistance

The Housing Authorities were designed as standard performers

Discussion

Polk County HND works closely with local PHA to support and partner with them to support the development of additional rental units. Most recently HOME ARP funds were used to support two projects for rental housing development for the Lakeland Housing Authority and the Winter Haven Housing Authority.

AP-65 Homeless and Other Special Needs Activities – 91.220(i)

Introduction – ESG RUSH

The following data delineates Polk County's most updated information/estimates of the needs of homeless individuals or families or individuals or families at risk of homelessness in areas affected by the most recent Federally declared disaster.

In Polk County Hurricane Ian created many challenges for people experiencing homelessness (prior to or as a result of the storms), stakeholders of the Homeless Coalition of Polk County Continuum of Care, and homeless service providers. Challenges include the ability to ensure appropriate housing options are available for people who have been displaced by the storm. ESG RUSH funds will be targeted to local Rapid Re-housing programs to facilitate access to the most appropriate response to each household's immediate and long-term housing needs and ensure that scarce housing resources are targeted to those who are most vulnerable and/or have been homeless the longest. Each ESG RUSH grantee will be working with the Homeless Coalition of Polk County's Coordinated Entry System to identify and outline the process by which services are accessed.

According to the HUD 2022 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Homeless Populations and Subpopulations FL-503 Lakeland/Polk County CoC Point in Time survey reported that a total of 506 homeless. With the storm in September 2022 displacement due to damaged housing or loss of access, lack of replacement housing, were challenges from Hurricane Ian. Furthermore the 2022 Annual Report from Florida's Council on Homelessness showed that 378 people were sheltered and 128 were unsheltered in Polk County. Additionally, 150 homeless families were reported in 2022. There were 460 unaccompanied homeless youth reported as well.

It is relevant to note that numbers could still be artificially depressed in 2022 compared with non-pandemic times.

Describe how you will use this allocation of RUSH funds to meet needs that are not otherwise served or fully met by the Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) program or existing Federal disaster relief programs

In Polk County Hurricane Ian created many challenges for people experiencing homelessness (prior to or as a result of the storms). Local nonprofit members of the Homeless Coalition of Polk

County Continuum of Care, and homeless service providers welcome additional funding to assist with storm related challenges. Challenges include the ability to ensure appropriate housing options are available for people who have been displaced by the storm. Additional ESG RUSH funding will provide this support by offering a Rapid Rehousing program with case management.

ESG Regular

Each year the county encourages public service providers to submit proposals for its CDBG and ESG funding in response to a Request for Applications (RFA). HND staff evaluate proposals for compliance with HUD guidelines. The Community Development Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) reviews and ranks applications for CDBG and ESG funding. The CAC ranks the proposals by priority and probability of successful completion. Based on these criteria, the CAC recommends a list of proposals to be funded to the Polk County BoCC for approval. The successful respondents deliver services after the execution of a subrecipient agreement with the BoCC. According to contract terms, each agency is responsible for submitting progress reports and invoices to HND. HND reviews all invoices and authorizes reimbursement upon satisfactory completion of work. Polk County solicits proposals for Public and Homeless Services annually.

Describe the jurisdictions one-year goals and actions for reducing and ending homelessness including Reaching out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assessing their individual needs

Reaching out to homeless persons (especially unsheltered persons) and assessing their individual needs. This year Public Service dollars are allocated to homeless service providers to meet the goals and actions for reducing and ending homelessness. Homeless clients are supported with food, rent assistance, and job services programs. Substance abuse programs and rehabilitation services for the blind are also provided.

Addressing the emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless persons

The Polk County Housing and Neighborhood Development Office works closely with the Homeless Coalition of Polk County to address future shelter needs for emergency and transitional housing. Members of the Continuum of Care are supported each year with Public Services funding and ESG grants. Late in 2023 additional ESG-RUSH funding was provided to all ESG Subrecipients as a result of the local affects of Hurricane Ian. This funding is dedicated to Rapid Rehousing assistance.

Helping homeless persons (especially chronically homeless individuals and families, families with children, veterans and their families, and unaccompanied youth) make the transition to permanent housing and independent living, including shortening the period of time that individuals and families experience homelessness, facilitating access for homeless individuals and families to affordable housing units, and preventing individuals and families who were

Program Specific Requirements

AP-90 Program Specific Requirements – 91.220(l)(1,2,4)

Introduction:

ESG Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) program Funding

The Polk County Housing and Neighborhood Development Office (HND) seeks to be a strong partner to Polk County areas affected by natural disasters. In these situations, HND will leverage all resources under its purview to provide support to vulnerable homeless clients. The ESG funding, and other potential grant sources provided by the Federal or State Governments are the resources that HND may use to support homeless people affected by natural disasters. RUSH will provide displaced disaster survivors with the longer-term direct rental assistance and supportive services needed to get back on their feet. ESG RUSH funding will provide rapid re-housing assistance, including up to 24 months of rental assistance, as well as supportive services for people currently experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness. The program will be administered through current ESG Subrecipient housing providers. Program funds are also eligible to cover move-in expenses, outreach costs, and other urgent needs for individuals that are unsheltered. RUSH funding will be available for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including those with incomes at or below 30% of Area Median Income and living in overcrowded homes, facing imminent eviction, or experiencing another risk factor for homelessness.

In order to provide flexible and meaningful support, HND reserves the right to focus grant funding (both old money and new money) and corresponding eligible component types to the disaster affected areas of Polk County. In these situations, HND may make targeted grant awards to governments and/or nonprofits to address direct deficits to existing programs, provide temporary support to expand program occupancy or fund a new activity such as rapid rehousing, street outreach or case management that can be utilized on the street or in temporary shelters to move new and existing clients into permanent housing. All activity that may be funded to support natural disasters would still need to align with regulations that govern these grants particularly the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), other funding sources regulations and with the procedures appended to this document.

During these declared disaster situations modifications will be made to Coordinated Entry (CE) and ESG Written Standards to account for disaster situations to accommodate eligible households wishing to move outside of their existing geography. Prioritization policies will be adjusted based on evolving information and circumstances including new or improved data, changing needs and priorities, and available resources.

ESG Regular Funding

Polk County solicits proposals for public and homeless services annually. Non-profit organizations are encouraged to apply. HND staff evaluates the proposals for compliance with HUD guidelines. The Community Development Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) reviews and ranks proposals for CDBG and ESG funding. The CAC ranks the proposals by priority, organizational capacity, and probability of successful completion of the proposed project. Based on these criteria, the CAC recommends a list of proposals to