

## Phase I Capacity

### **1. Have you decided on a specific government agency to implement the proposed activities? What is its role and management capacity?**

The proposed CDBG National Disaster Resilience proposal will be managed by the Jefferson County's Community and Economic Development Department, which serves as the HUD Entitlement Administrator. The Department has over 30 years of management experience with federal and state programs and currently serves as the administrator of the largest HUD Entitlement County program in the state of Alabama. The administration of the HUD programs include Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); the HOME program for Affordable Housing; and the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program, which is designed to assist the homeless population in the Birmingham, Alabama Continuum of Care. In addition, the Community and Economic Development Department is the administrator of the largest Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program in the Alabama. This program provides core, intensive, and training services to eligible job seekers in Jefferson County.

The Department also manages other federal programs such as Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for approved grants relating to the April 27, 2011 tornado that struck Jefferson killing and severely injuring many persons. Other federal grants currently being managed or previously managed by the Department include the Department of Justice (DOJ) grants, Health and Human Services, and USDA Rural Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

### **2. Describe how the agency has (or plans to obtain) relevant project management, quality assurance, financial and procurement, and internal control capacity to quickly launch and implement a major project**

The highly experienced staff of the Department of Community and Economic Development prepares the required Five (5) Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plans. Once projects are approved in the Annual Action Plan, the staff develops the cooperation agreement with entities involved with the implementation of the proposed project, which sets forth the required regulations requirement of HUD or another federal or state program. The agreement is reviewed by the county's legal department for final approval by the Jefferson County Commission.

After cooperation agreements are approved, the staff utilizes its extensive experience in assuring compliance with the statutory environmental rules and regulations as it relates to implementing the proposed project.

The Department's Accounting division has extensive experience in financial management of federal and state programs. The accounting division has sufficient staff in place to assure sound

financial Internal Control. The staff is led by the Deputy Director of the Department who is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with approximately 30 years of public accounting experience. The accounting division also has one (1) Principle Accountant who is also a CPA who manages two (2) Senior Accountants and an Accountant to assure duties are delegated to assure financial control.

The Accounting division uses the county's accounting software that allow for a proper accounting of the federal and state funds managed by the Department.

The Department also has many years of experience in procuring professional services such engineering services, architectural services, appraisal services, private developers for affordable housing, as well other services needed through a Request for Qualification (RFQ) or Request for Proposal (RFP) process in compliance with the state of Alabama's procurement policies.

The Department's HOME program, which is designed to provide affordable housing to low and moderate income persons, is led by a Senior Grants Management Coordinator who has over 23 years of experience in managing HUD programs. This staff member is a certified HOME Program Specialist and passed the National Development Council's Rental Development Finance examination with a perfect score. In addition, this staff person has a real estate license and is a member of the Low Income Housing Coalition.

The specific experience of the Senior Grant Management Coordinator in working with single family housing and multi-family housing is as follows:

- Subsidy Layering Analysis
- Site and Neighborhood Standards Review
- Environmental Review
- Written Agreement Requirements
- URA
- Section 3
- MBE/WBE
- Davis Bacon
- Approval of Construction Contracts
- Approval Construction Draws
- Approval of all Loan Closings Documents to Enforce Required Period of Affordability
- Income Eligibility of Homebuyer and Tenants
- Approval of Rents
- Underwriting of Homebuyer Loans
- Underwriting of Multi-Family Loans
- Ongoing Compliance Monitoring

The Housing Division of Community and Economic development has a Senior Housing Rehabilitation staff that does inspection of single family and multi-family housing during the construction phase. The staff member had an Alabama Homebuilder License and an Alabama Heating and Cooling Contractor's license. In addition, the staff person has a Lead and Risk certification.

In addition, the HOME division has Community Development Representative that oversees the general administration of the HOME program and oversees the Davis Bacon requirement pertaining to the program.

The Department also has a Non-Housing division that oversees the construction of public facilities and infrastructure projects. This Division is led by a Community Development Specialist (CDS) with over 20 years of experience. The CDS has one (1) Senior Grants Management Coordinator and a Community Resource Representative that provides project management as presented below:

- Preparation of Environmental Assessments
- Procurement of Professional Services
- Bidding and Contracting for Construction Projects
- Davis Bacon Requirement
- Inspection of Projects during Construction
- Project Close-out

This team of professionals has the capacity to assure major projects are implemented expeditiously and in compliance with applicable federal and state regulations.

**3. Describe the agency's experience working with and coordinating partners (including contractors, funders, subrecipients, community stakeholders, and other government agencies) in previous projects similar to the proposed activities. If you do not have such experience, how will you get it?**

The Community and Economic Development Department implements all of its various projects by coordinating with partners. For example, the Department has worked in conjunction with the Birmingham Habitat for Humanity to implement single family housing projects throughout Jefferson County

The Department has also work with private developers and public developers to construct multi-family housing project throughout the county.

The Non- Housing Division of the Department procures and works with consulting architects to implement public facilities such as senior citizens center, fire stations, public libraries, community centers, etc. Moreover, the Department procures consulting engineers to design water projects, road improvements, as well as other infrastructure projects.

**4. Who wrote this application, state/community staff or a professional technician or grant writer in a consulting or contract capacity? If a professional writer was the drafter, describe how the Applicant staff and decision makers were actively engaged in the writing process and how they will maintain Applicant systems understanding and analytic capacity over time.**

The grant application was written by the Director of Community and Economic Development for Jefferson County who serves as a professional grant writer for the Southeast Alabama Regional Planning Commission for 15. The Director provided grant writing and administration of federal grants such as CDBG, EDA Public Works, FEMA Hazard Mitigation; Alabama Department of Transportation Grants, etc. The Phase I proposal was also written in conjunction with Goodwyn Mill and Cawood (GMC), a local architectural, engineering and planning firm under contract with Jefferson County.

The Director along with the staff and GMC will be completely involved analytically with the proposed project throughout the implementation phase.

The Department of Community and Economic Development and GMC will remain engaged over time to maintain the applicants understanding and analytic capacity overtime.

**B. Cross disciplinary technical capacity**

**1. Describe the capacity of each of your partners. Specifically identify areas of expertise for yourself and each partner.**

As previously mentioned, Jefferson County's Department of Community and Economic Development being the HUD Entitlement Administrator for the county has the capacity to assure the proposed project will be implemented in compliance with all federal and state regulations in a timely manner. The Department has over 30 years of experience in implementing a similar proposed for this competition.

Moreover, the Department of Community and Economic Development oversee the Department of Labor (DOL) Workforce Investment ACT (WIA) Workforce Development program that provides core intensive and training services to job seekers in Jefferson County. If a job seeker meets the eligibility of the program for training services, a one (1) time grant up to \$13,000.00 is available for training in a high demand occupation.

The Department is also engaged with the Office of Senior Citizens Services that provides an array of services to senior citizens in Jefferson County. The programs include daily nutritional meals, assistance for care givers, assistance with understanding insurance opportunities and services from Medicaid and Medicare; assistance with prescribed medications, opportunities for senior employment, etc.

The partners who will work with Jefferson County for the implementation of the proposed are presented below:

1. **The Southern Company:** Alabama Power is the major provider of electricity in the state of Alabama.
2. **AT&T:** AT&T is a major phone company that provides communication services throughout Jefferson County and has the capacity to extend broadband for internet access.
3. **Birmingham Business Alliance:** The regional economic development organization that work in the area of industrial recruitment, retention, and workforce development.
4. **Jefferson County Birmingham Transit Authority:** The agency provides public transportation throughout Jefferson County.
5. **Community Foundation of Alabama:** The foundation provides grant support to non-profit organizations serving Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Blount and Walker counties.
6. **United of Way of Central Alabama:**
7. **Birmingham Habitat for Humanity:** Established in 1987, the Greater Birmingham Habitat for Humanity is dedicated making quality, affordable housing solutions available to low income families.
8. **Bryant Bank:**
9. **Innovation Depot:**
10. **Goodwyn Mills and Cawood:**
11. **City of Birmingham, Alabama**
12. **ADECA**
13. **City of Bessemer**

**2. How will you work across disciplines in achieving project goals? What experience does your team have in multi-discipline work?**

The concept is multidisciplinary in approach, involving housing, transit, energy, commercial development, design, planning, and social issues. The applicant has formed or will form partnerships with experts in each area in order to utilize the best possible resources in a project involving all of these areas. Understanding the connections and interdependencies amongst these disciplines is crucial to the projects' long term success. The partners and the applicant have significant multidisciplinary experience.

The applicant, as a county government, is involved in aspects of housing, transportation, community development, planning, and in working with low and moderate income populations. (FH should add to this section) United Way of Central Alabama has many multidisciplinary programs, including the administration of Safe Routes to School, which involves education, transportation, infrastructure, and public health.

Habitat for Humanity, while primarily a housing organization also has experience in leveraging funds and administering those funds for other uses besides housing, and particularly for infrastructure. Habitat also has invaluable experience in engaging low income populations.

The Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham brings together various entities in providing funding for programs that address a wide array of issues such as poverty, access to healthy food, economic stability, and education. Goodwyn, Mills, and Cawood (GMC) is a multidisciplinary firm, with architects, engineers, landscape architects, and planners all involved in this project.

**3. What experience do you and you partners have with area-wide or comprehensive planning? With implementing large, complex programs or projects?**

The applicant has vast experience in area-wide and comprehensive planning as a county government, creating strategic, community development, transportation, land use, and other plans for the County on a consistent basis. In this planning capacity, the applicant also implements large, complex programs and projects regularly, such as \_\_\_\_\_ . Partners also have experience in area-wide and comprehensive planning. GMC has created comprehensive plans for various communities throughout the Southeast and aids those communities in the implementation of those plans. Other partners, like United Way of Central Alabama, implement large, complex programs such as the Health Action Partnership throughout the Birmingham area. The Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority creates transit plans and implements them throughout the area as well.

**4. Describe how you and your Partners have data analysis, public works, affordable housing, environmental quality, community engagement, design and engineering, affordable housing, economic revitalization, and other relevant experience to quickly launch implement a major project? Alternately, how will you get the capacity?**

By partnering with various entities and experts, the applicant has the capacity to quickly launch and implement a major project. The applicant and partners are utilizing data to determine where need is greatest based on likelihood of future storm events, need for affordable housing, and best capacity for a sustainable neighborhood. In addition to already engaging with stakeholders, the applicant has begun the process of identifying potential sites for the construction of sustainable communities. GMC architects and planners have begun creating concept drawings and plans that can be completed as construction drawings tailored to the sites within a short period. Habitat for Humanity consistently builds affordable housing in a short time frame and will be ready to begin construction when planning and design area completed. By doing data analysis, design, research, and community and stakeholder engagement before the awarding of funding for this proposal, the applicant will be well-positioned to quickly launch and implement the project(s).

**5. Specifically, do you or your Partner(s) have the capacity to identify and assess science-based information on existing and future risks from climate change? What is your capacity to assess and address possible future conditions and risks and possible benefits and outcomes, including resilience, of project(s) or program(s) over their lifetimes?**

The applicant has the capacity to identify and assess science based information on existing and future risks from climate change by partnering with experts in the meteorology, geotechnical and structural engineering, building science, and planning fields. Each of these expert partners allows the applicant to assess and address possible future conditions and risks by providing expertise in its respective fields. The meteorology expert will identify the risks the County faces from future strong storms and tornado activity generally and also specific locations within the impacted area that are particularly susceptible to tornadoes to the extent that meteorological data provides predictions of frequent storm paths, meteorological or topographical conditions that affect storm paths, and the overall risk of the impacted area to be affected by storms. The geotechnical and structural engineering expert(s) will assess soil conditions, stability of slopes, and capability of buildings and infrastructure to withstand high wind speeds and tornado rotation. Geotechnical engineering assessments of soil and slopes are important to predict and assess potential and indirect damage such as fallen trees or slope washout from heavy rains. Building science expert(s) will assess the ability of existing buildings to withstand damage from tornadoes and the need for higher building standards and/or the need for community storm shelters. Planning experts will address future risks by compiling data provided by other experts, analyzing areas of high risk, and creating plans for projects that specifically address these risks and vulnerabilities.

- 6. Do you or any of your Partner(s) have experience working with civil rights and fair housing issues including, for example, working with data to analyze racial and economic disparities.**
- 7. How will you determine and ensure excellent design quality that enhances long-term resilience? Is the Applicant's capacity to design or plan dependent on Partner's capacity? If yes, describe the dependency.**
- 8. What is your plan to regain capacity if a Partner drops out?**

If a partner drops out of the project, the applicant intends to regain that capacity by seeking a partner with similar capacity that can join the project quickly and effectively address any diminished capacity. As the applicant has secured letters of commitment from each of the identified partners, it is unlikely that a partner will drop out.

- 9. How will you determine whether a project is reasonable? Briefly describe your Partner's experience with cost benefit analysis, such as FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Cost Effectiveness process or cost efficiency for Department of Transportation programs? If you are proposing to work with no partner(s), explain why your approach is appropriate given your circumstances. Also, describe how you will procure or otherwise acquire capacity in the areas listed above, as applicable.**

GMC has extensive experience in conducting Benefit Cost Analysis for FEMA Hazard Mitigation projects.

### **Community Engagement Capacity**

- 1. Describe your and your Partners' capacity to engage community stakeholders, including those most likely to be affected by / most vulnerable to future threat(s) and hazard(s) including the effects of climate change, in discussing and identifying unmet recovery and resilience needs, and designing and selecting approaches to address the needs. How will feedback be implemented into the applications? Will outreach be done to continue keeping stakeholders involved in the process if the projects move into implementation?**

The applicant has far reaching experience in engaging community stakeholders as it provides public notice for virtually all of its activities and frequently conducts projects that involve significant requirements for public participation. The applicant is also partnering with various organizations that frequently engage not only the public by especially vulnerable and low-income populations and have in-depth understanding of those populations' needs as well as wide experience in collecting input from these groups; the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham and United Way of Central Alabama both work with the area's most vulnerable populations on a consistent basis. (NOTE: Need examples of projects on which these groups have engaged vulnerable populations.) These and other partners will be instrumental in discussing and identifying unmet recovery and resilience needs as they have the experience to reach populations that can be somewhat difficult to reach and have limited access to resources.

The applicant is planning for **a minimum of three stakeholder meetings** to take place before the Phase 1 application deadline. Stakeholders will be determined by a variety of factors, including but not limited to those directly affected by the 2011 tornadoes through loss of housing or employment, those living in close proximity to frequent storm paths, and low-income people at high risk due to disability, age, or other factors. The findings from these stakeholder meetings will be incorporated into the applications in the form of both qualitative and quantitative data. For examples, numbers of participants directly affected can be used as quantitative data while anecdotal evidence such as how the event has affected participants psychologically and socially can be used as qualitative data. The input from stakeholders has helped shape the concept as it appears in its final form in the application, as addressing not only unmet needs but also desires of stakeholders is vital to the success of the potential project(s). If the project moves forward to implementation, continued input from initial and other identified stakeholders will be essential to ensure that the project will address needs to the greatest extent possible. Partners will continue to aid in the outreach and input process as their experience in this area is invaluable and substantial.

**2. How have you worked with and empowered formal and informal community leaders in the execution of past projects?**

The Department of Community and Economic Development has worked and empowered community leaders in the execution of past projects. On a formal basis, the staff worked with the county manager's staff on projects in the implementation phase, as well as with the County Commissioners during the committee agenda meetings was agreements, status of projects, and proposed projects for the Five Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan is discussed.

In addition, the staff conducts a variety of public meetings where community leaders attend to learn of possible funding community and economic development projects. In addition, the staff often attends community meetings to inform the leaders of the community the status of projects and seek input during the design phase.

**3. Do you or any Partner(s) have experience or capacity working with and harmonizing the contributions of diverse stakeholders in the consultation process?**

**D. Regional or multi-governmental capacity**

**1. What is the extent of you experience working on an effectively addressing regional problems?**

**2. Describe how you will work regionally on resilience. Are the threat(s) and/or hazard(s) you are addressing regional? Would local solutions negatively affect other areas? Would a regional solution be more practical, protect a greater population, and be more cost effective? Are there best practices that can be used in building this regional approach?**

By its very nature, the applicant is a regional entity, with Jefferson County being comprised of \_\_\_\_\_ municipalities. The long-term commitment to resilience will be a regional approach, as the County's commitment to utilize more rigorous building standards that it builds or provides financing for will affect projects throughout the County, regardless of municipal boundaries. Furthermore, the commitment to seek requirements for utilizing higher building standards to issue any permits within the County's jurisdiction will ensure that construction not governed by any municipalities' codes will be built to a higher standard of endurance. As the entire County is within an area designated as the highest risk classification for tornadoes used by FEMA (annual number of tornadoes per 2470 square miles greater than 15), the threat is regional. While the potential projects will be site specific, the site specificity of the projects will not negatively affect other areas as the entire County will benefit from more affordable housing built within the context of a sustainable neighborhood. As the largest identified unmet recovery need is affordable, single family housing, a site specific solution is the most effective and sustainable, as scattering multiple homes throughout the County might help address the need, it would do nothing to create a sustainable, more resilient neighborhood, nor would that method produce any other benefits, such as health, proximity, and reduced sprawl and pollution provided by a sustainable neighborhood. Furthermore, a site specific approach to the project(s) is the most cost effective, as identifying one to three sites is easier, potentially cheaper, and less time-consuming than identifying and acquiring 50 or more.

While the project approach will be site specific, the input and stakeholder engagement will be regional in scope. The applicant wants to ensure that populations from throughout the County are engaged, and not only those directly affected by the event. The applicant's goals for the project(s) include not only providing affordable housing in a sustainable neighborhood but also providing greater protections for the entire population over the long term. This regional approach to participation will be achieved by engaging a diverse group of stakeholders in a variety of locations throughout the County in order to achieve broad participation.

**3. Have you considered how a regional approach could reduce protected class-related disparities and improve choices and opportunities for vulnerable populations?**

The utilization of a regional approach by the applicant and its partners will result in reduced protected-class disparities as the partners especially have significant experience in working with the most vulnerable populations. By utilizing a regional approach, particularly in the participation process, the applicant will be able to best determine where the greatest needs remain and who continues to be affected by the event after several years. Identifying those still affected and those most vulnerable to future risks by examining a variety of factors such as location, income, condition of housing, and age will allow the applicant to tailor the project specifications to best improve choices and opportunities to fit the needs of vulnerable populations. As the event affect primarily areas with high percentages of low income and

minority populations, the concept involves the provision of affordable homeownership opportunities to replace affordable housing destroyed in the tornadoes. Providing affordable housing in a neighborhood with recreational opportunities, a resource center, access to transit, and goods and services within close proximity significantly improves opportunities for vulnerable populations by offering easy access to a variety of needs and amenities in close proximity to their housing.

**5. Will you use an existing multi-entity organization or establish a new one to carry out your proposed project? If yes, describe the entity's role. If not, describe why not**

Jefferson County will use an existing multi-entity organization for the implementation of the proposed project. The county is proposing to develop a sustainable community that offer the vulnerable of the community quality of life and economic opportunities that will greatly improve their lives.

AT&T has assured the county broadband service can be made available to the proposed sustainable communities proposed to be built. Therefore, the community will have access to Internet Service and computers where the residents have access to information on the job training opportunities through the county's WIA Workforce Development program; job opportunities for available through the Innovation Depot, which oversees the county business incubator program, healthcare opportunities where information can be shared from various health care providers, etc.

The Jefferson County Commission will use its existing EDA/CDBG RLF program to market a commercial store that will be part of the sustainable community, but also serve the larger area.

Alabama Power has assured the county adequate power can be is made available to the site(s).

Jefferson County Birmingham Transit Authority will assure the residents of the communities have transportation to essential services, workforce development training sites, work sites, and health care facilities, etc.

The Community Foundation of Birmingham has committed funding for the sustainable community that will be selected in the future.

Birmingham Habitat for Humanity has committed to building affordable housing in the sustainable community.