

# a home for all

POWERED BY UNITED WAY

Mecklenburg County  
Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH)  
Strike Fund Structure  
Request for Proposal

November 25, 2024

Primary Contacts

Contact	Title
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**Please submit all questions or concerns to  
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## **Project Objectives and Scope of Work**

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Mecklenburg County has commissioned United Way of Greater Charlotte to procure a consultant to advise on the creation of a Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) Strike Fund. The aim of this fund would be to provide one or more types of financing to a developer and/or housing operator to preserve existing rental housing that might otherwise be lost or converted into market-rate housing.

## BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

United Way of Greater Charlotte is contracted with Mecklenburg County to administer [A Home For All](#), a multiyear initiative to ensure county housing efforts create a community where homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring, and that every person has access to permanent, affordable housing and the resources to sustain it.

To achieve these goals, the United Way created [an Implementation Plan](#) that calls for the creation of a countywide acquisition strike fund. Following the recommendation of this plan, Mecklenburg County approved an allocation in its FY2025 budget to United Way of Greater Charlotte to fund the work outlined in this Request For Proposals.

In September 2023, Mecklenburg County engaged [Grounded Solutions Network](#) and [Up For Growth](#) as part of its [ForEveryoneHome](#) cohort to produce a [Housing Underproduction Report](#) and [Housing Action Plan](#), which included in its recommendations that the county develop a strike fund that thoroughly addresses the housing needs of municipalities throughout the county. To that end, Grounded Solutions and United Way, who have worked together for the duration of the ForEveryoneHome process, have codeveloped this RFP.

For the purposes of the NOAH Strike Fund, the County has elected to focus on properties in the multifamily rental market. These properties are usually Class B and Class C properties where tenants pay below market rents due to a variety of factors, which may include property management decisions, age of property, proximity to transit and services, and housing availability nearby.

The County has stated that it wants to create a NOAH Strike Fund with the flexibility to respond quickly to opportunities brought to it by the managing structure of the fund. The County has also expressed interest in finding and funding opportunities for housing preservation throughout Mecklenburg County, particularly in North Mecklenburg municipalities such as Cornelius, Davidson, and Huntersville. These are areas identified by Grounded Solutions Network and Up For Growth as critically important for housing availability based on economic mobility and access to transit infrastructure. The creation of a multijurisdictional NOAH Strike Fund should be the goal of the consultant's work.

## SCOPE OF WORK

The selected consultant shall be responsible for creating two deliverables in the first 120 days of the contract term: a state-of-the-field report that includes interviews with stakeholders (Task 2), to be created in the first 60 days of the contracted term; and a

draft fund recommendation report that includes recommended fund amount, product mix, and project pipeline goals (Tasks 3 through 5), to be delivered in the first 120 days of the contracted term.

After the first 120 days of the contracted term, the selected consultant will then work with United Way of Greater Charlotte to determine the timeline for deliverables outlined in Tasks 6 through 8, with the total timeline of the project not to extend past January 31, 2026, unless an extension is mutually agreed upon by both parties.

### **TASK 1: Project Management**

The consultant will manage and oversee all technical aspects and coordinate project management tasks and participate in meetings no less frequently than monthly with the United Way team. The consultant will provide the necessary documentation to support the administrative, contractual, invoicing, and reporting aspects required by United Way of Greater Charlotte.

**Task 1.1: Kickoff Meeting** – The consultant shall attend a kickoff meeting with the United Way team to discuss the work plan, project expectations, timeline, and deliverables, and resolve any outstanding questions. The consultant shall provide a memorandum summarizing the contents of the kickoff meeting. The kickoff meeting will be held by Jan. 31, 2025, following contract execution and will be either through Zoom or in-person at the United Way of Greater Charlotte office.

**Task 1.2: Monthly Invoicing** – The consultant shall provide United Way with monthly invoices, accompanied by a progress report that summarizes the tasks completed that month. Consultant shall track and report critical path activities and milestones and prepare and submit monthly progress reports to United Way of Greater Charlotte. Monthly progress reports shall detail the work performed and deliverables completed during the previous month, identify any issues encountered, and provide proposed solution(s) to address any issues identified.

Each monthly progress report shall at a minimum include:

- Summary
- Progress narrative for completing the scope of work
- Description of tasks completed
- Updated project schedule describing the percentage of each task/deliverable/milestone
- Summary of costs incurred per task/milestone/remaining funds
- List of deliverable items
- Issues that arise, if applicable
- Needed corrective actions, if applicable
- 30-day look ahead

**Task 1.3: Monthly Meetings** – The consultant shall attend at least one project management meeting per month with the United Way of Greater Charlotte team and a

Mecklenburg County designee to discuss progress and address questions or concerns for this project's duration. The consultant shall provide a memorandum summarizing the contents of each meeting. Meetings are expected to be at least one hour and will be through Zoom. In addition to monthly meetings, the consultant shall maintain timely and regular contact with United Way of Greater Charlotte's project manager for the project's duration.

**Task 1.4 Closeout Files** - At the end of the project, the Consultant shall document and assemble all project deliverables and provide them to United Way of Greater Charlotte. The files should be in accordance with United Way of Greater Charlotte's project close-out procedures which will be provided. All deliverables shall be provided in accordance with the Project Schedule.

Consultant shall document all project deliverables in an organized fashion and deliver them in an electronic format at the end of the project, along with an Excel file documenting location and completion of deliverables.

## **TASK 2: State-of-the-Field Report**

As previously mentioned, the consultant shall produce, in the first 60 days of the contract term, a state-of-the-field report that includes the following engagement efforts:

**Affordable Housing Developer Engagement** – In coordination with United Way of Greater Charlotte, the consultant will conduct targeted engagement of developers in Mecklenburg County and surrounding areas, with a focus on those dealing with affordable housing. Developer engagement will uncover the opportunities, challenges, and possible solutions to develop a NOAH Strike Fund and inform organizational development recommendations. Engagement methods may include surveys and interviews as determined appropriate by the consultant with review by the United Way Program Director.

**Potential Funder Engagement** – In coordination with United Way of Greater Charlotte, the consultant will conduct targeted engagement of national and local institutions (including, but not limited to, corporations, philanthropic organizations, and public jurisdictions outside Mecklenburg County) to gauge interest in investment in the NOAH Housing Strike Fund. Engagement methods may include surveys and interviews as determined appropriate by the consultant with review by the United Way Program Director.

**Existing Fund Engagement** – In coordination with United Way of Greater Charlotte, the consultant will conduct targeted engagement of existing funds such as strike funds, acquisition loan funds, and/or revolving loan funds across the country to determine best practices and lessons learned in the formation process. The consultant should also consider the operations of existing housing funds in the Mecklenburg County area. Engagement methods may include surveys/questionnaires, interviews, and other

methods as determined appropriate by the consultant with review by the United Way Program Director.

The report shall include conclusions and recommendations regarding the direction of a Mecklenburg County NOAH Strike Fund, based upon interviews. Additionally, the report shall include a list of questions set forth to each of the three aforementioned groups, and a draft set of notes for each interview.

### **TASK 3: Draft NOAH Strike Fund Recommendation Report**

As previously mentioned, the consultant shall produce, in the first 120 days of the contract term, a draft NOAH Strike Fund recommendation report that includes the following:

**Analysis of Proposed Housing Preservation Landscape** – The consultant shall research affordable housing developers and operators active in the Mecklenburg County based on all available data sources, including previously submitted applications for public resources for the development and preservation of affordable housing in Mecklenburg County and its municipalities. The consultant shall prepare a contact list of the potential developers and operators to be engaged after the NOAH Strike Fund is formed.

The consultant, in coordination with United Way of Greater Charlotte, shall identify potential existing affordable housing in Mecklenburg County that could be preserved through the NOAH Strike Fund. The consultant shall interview developers and operators and analyze feedback to gather a general sense of the impact that a NOAH Strike Fund could have on their willingness to sell or enter into a long-term affordability agreement with the County. The consultant shall work with United Way to obtain and analyze the properties alluded to in the A Home For All Implementation Plan as part of this effort. A spreadsheet including the site location, number of units, populations served, current ownership contact information, and any potential or pending sale status of the projects shall be submitted.

**Organizational Structure:** The consultant shall analyze existing national strike funds to outline an organizational structure, including the use and fees of a fund manager, the creation of a Board to manage the Fund, the recruitment of Board members, and any potential staff.

**Funding Opportunities** – The consultant shall identify potential funding sources that would cover administrative, startup, and capital costs of the NOAH Strike Fund. Potential funding sources shall include local, regional/subregional, state, federal, and private sources, as well as existing or new funds available to seed the NOAH Strike Fund. The report shall analyze each funding source, including benefits and challenges, probability of securing source funding, potential amount of funds, and other pertinent aspects. The report shall recommend actions to improve the probability of securing source funding.

**Funding Strategies and Implementation Plan** – Based on research, the consultant shall outline an implementation plan that includes:

- A plan to obtain seed funding by June 30, 2025
- A range of short-, medium-, and long-term actions to obtain funding for housing from public, nonprofit, and private interests
- Strategies for identifying and building relationships with funders

#### **TASK 6: NOAH Strike Fund Program Development**

After the two aforementioned deliverables encompassing Tasks 2 through 5 are completed in the first 120 days of the contract term, the selected consultant shall be responsible for NOAH Strike Fund program development, including:

**Recommended Loan Products** – Building on data and information gathered in Tasks 2 through 5, the consultant shall recommend a suite of loan products for the NOAH Strike Fund to offer that will support the preservation and/or rehabilitation of existing affordable housing units. Such programs may include, but are not limited to funding for pre-development, construction, property rehabilitation or preservation, and other potential programs.

**Funding Guidelines and Underwriting Criteria** – The consultant shall prepare funding guidelines and underwriting criteria for the NOAH Strike Fund programs in order to prepare term sheets for potential projects.

**Targeted Engagement Plan** – Building upon previous efforts, the consultant shall prepare recommendations on the appropriate levels of targeted engagement to be conducted after the fund is formed to raise awareness about the NOAH Strike Fund. The consultant shall recommend marketing materials detailing the pivotal role of investment in existing affordable housing through the NOAH Strike Fund to meet housing needs in Mecklenburg County.

#### **TASK 7: NOAH Strike Fund Strategic Plan**

Building on data and information gathered in Tasks 2 through 6, the consultant shall prepare a Strategic Plan for the NOAH Strike Fund. The plan will include, but not be limited to, the following elements:

- Definition of the purpose and structure of the NOAH Strike Fund
- Specification of goals, objectives, and strategies
- Organization draft bylaws
- Outline of timelines and schedules
- Estimated startup costs to initiate and operate the NOAH Strike Fund as well as ongoing operations
- Summary of required resources for formation and implementation
- Overview of administrative duties and responsibilities, including identification of staff and needs to form organizational departments

- Recommendations on the creation of the NOAH Strike Fund Board of Directors to manage initial and ongoing strike fund activities and goals, details about board governance, meeting protocols, and administration and oversight
- Creation of the NOAH Strike Fund financial account and any sub-accounts needed for administrative purposes, along with list of legal requirements, if needed
- Creation of annual reporting procedures for the fund administrator to maintain records and publish efforts for participating cities to review
- Establish procedures to allow Mecklenburg County member jurisdictions to enter or exit the NOAH Strike Fund
- Establish prequalification guidelines for developers

This task will include preparation of a draft Strategic Plan that will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners. Based upon feedback from Commissioners and other relevant County officials, the consultant shall revise and prepare a final Strategic Plan document for adoption by the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners.

**TASK 8: Resolution**

In consultation with United Way of Greater Charlotte, the consultant will prepare a draft resolution for consideration by the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners to create the Mecklenburg County NOAH Strike Fund. Additionally, the consultant will prepare a draft resolution for cities to adopt if they want to join the Mecklenburg County NOAH Strike Fund. If time and funding allow, following presentations to the deliberative bodies, the consultant shall adjust and update the final resolution(s) based on any comments received.

**BUDGET / COST PROPOSAL**

United Way of Greater Charlotte anticipates a not-to-exceed total budget of \$150,000 for this work. All hard and soft costs, including travel, will fall under this budget.

United Way of Greater Charlotte asks bidders to review all tasks and deliverables and submit bids based on their understanding of the work scope. Proposals should be submitted with a line-item budget by task. Proposers can pose options to offer flexibility in their work scope. The budget should be submitted in a spreadsheet format and at a minimum include:

- Total project hours
- Hours allotted per task
- Staff assigned to project, with titles and hourly rates
- Anticipated hard and soft costs, including travel
- Sub-consultants must also be included

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>
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## SCHEDULE

The timeline for this scope of work assumes a Mon., January 12, 2025, start date. The total project is expected to last 12 months. All work shall be completed by Jan. 31, 2026, unless an extension is mutually agreed upon by both parties.

## PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals shall be no more than 10 pages, excluding resumes and references, and submitted in the specified format as follows:

**Cover Letter** – Provide the name, mailing address, telephone number, email address, title, and signature of the firm’s authority and/or contact person for this procurement. Also include the office location if it is different than the mailing address.

**Technical Approach** – Describe your understanding of the project and recommended project approach. Outline the proposed scope of work/services and provide a proposed project schedule.

**Project Team Qualifications** – Describe the responsibilities of team members and their qualifications. Identify the project manager and principal contact person. Provide references (minimum of two and maximum of three) preferably including a government agency for recent relevant experience for similar projects/services. Include project team member resumes.

Proposals shall be submitted in electronic format via e-mail to [ahomeforall@unitedwaygreaterclt.org](mailto:ahomeforall@unitedwaygreaterclt.org) by 5 p.m. ET on Friday, December 20, 2024.

Emailed proposals must be print-ready. No fax or mailed proposals will be accepted. All submissions will receive a confirmation email within 1 business day. If you do not receive a confirmation email from your proposal submission, please contact [ahomeforall@unitedwaygreaterclt.org](mailto:ahomeforall@unitedwaygreaterclt.org). Proposals received after **5 p.m. ET on Friday, December 20, 2024**, will be rejected. Requests for extensions of time and date will not be granted. Proposals or unsolicited amendments to proposals received by United Way of Greater Charlotte after the acceptance date will not be considered.

United Way of Greater Charlotte reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or to negotiate separately in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of United Way of Greater Charlotte. United Way of Greater Charlotte will select the most qualified consultant and not necessarily the lowest bidder. United Way of Greater Charlotte also retains the right to waive irregularities in the proposal.

United Way of Greater Charlotte will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by a firm in preparing and submitting a proposal.

### Project Schedule:

Below is the schedule of our current timeline. It is subject to change.

Project Milestones	Deadline
RFP Release	December 2, 2024



RFP Questions period ends	December 9, 2024
Responses to proposers' questions posted online	December 12, 2024
RFP Close Date (Proposal must be submitted no later than this date)	December 20, 2024, at 5:00pm EST
Initial Proposal Reviews by Stakeholders	January 2-3, 2025
Interviews with finalists	January 6-8, 2025
Anticipated Notice to Proceed for selected consultant	January 10, 2025

**Terms and Conditions**

Please note that the following terms and conditions apply to this RFP:

- This RFP is an invitation for proposal only; submission of a proposal does not guarantee award.
- United Way of Greater Charlotte shall not be obligated in any manner to any applicant responding to this RFP until a written agreement has been executed.
- United Way of Greater Charlotte shall not be liable for any costs associated with the preparation of RFP presentation or proposal materials.
- While sub-contracting any phase of the work identified in the RFP may be considered, the applicant submitting the proposal must assume full responsibility for the end-to-end process and deliverables. Applicants must disclose if they are using, or intend to use, subcontracted services as part of the proposal.
- Any and all verbal discussions and responses related to this RFP are not binding on either party.
- United Way of Greater Charlotte may issue addenda during the proposal period by the designated official. All addenda become part of the RFP documents and responses must be submitted with the proposal. It is the responsibility of the applicant to establish whether or not United Way of Greater Charlotte has issued any addenda.