

Rural Workforce Housing Initiative Frequently Asked Questions

Key Program Requirements:

Program Requirements	RWHI Infrastructure Grant	RWHI Construction Loan
Primary Applicant	Local government/City/County must be the primary applicant.	The developer is the primary applicant.
Activity	Land and infrastructure development for rental or for-sale housing with a per-unit cost of \$125,000-290,000. Rental properties must be affordable for 100% Area Median Income renters for at least ten years, provide two or more bedrooms per unit, and provide essential services, including broadband.	For-sale, single-family homes for use as a primary residence with a sale price of between \$125,000 and \$290,000.
Award	Maximum \$2.5 million grant	Maximum \$1 million loan
Match	No match is required, but leveraged resources are expected	Yes. 50% should come from traditional bank financing. 10% should be developer cash equity.
Timeframe	The project must be completed within thirty (30) months from the award date.	The project must be completed, the home must be sold to an owner-occupied homebuyer, and the loan must be repaid to DCA within thirty (30) months of the award date.
Application Deadline	Applications are accepted Quarterly (2 nd Friday of the following months: July, October, January and April. An Initial Project Assessment meeting must be held with the DCA Regional Representative before the submission of the pre-application. Pre-applications are due 30 days before the full application.)	Applications will be considered on a rolling basis. An Initial Project Assessment meeting must be held with a RWHI program staff member before the submission of the application.

Rural Workforce Housing Initiative Infrastructure Grant FAQ

1. What is the URL to your website?
 - a. Please click the link to be directed to the website:
<https://dca.georgia.gov/financing-tools/infrastructure/onegeorgia-authority>
2. Is there a timeline to build the houses after the infrastructure is in place?
 - a. Yes, the entire Project must be completed within thirty months.
3. Please expand on the neighboring county requirement; What authority should write the supporting letter, and is it required that all neighboring counties support the development?
 - a. There is no longer a requirement for neighboring counties to write support letters. Conditionally eligible counties must demonstrate regional impact with their application.
4. How detailed does the "plan" for developing land need to be before the IPA? Is this just a community that has identified land and infrastructure needs, or do we already need committed developers for an Infrastructure Grant?
 - a. Applications require a housing study/plan that can demonstrate the need for additional housing units within the community. A deep dive into the current available housing in the community. There should be a clear picture of the gaps in the current housing market. There must be a committed developer before an application can be submitted.
5. Is there a limit to the number of grants or the amount of funds that can go to any single region?
 - a. If the community has already received an award from the RWHI program, One Georgia Authority must observe significant progress before allocating any additional funds to that same community.
6. Can you define leveraging resources?
 - a. Leveraged Resources mean additional fund contributions from the Local government and the developer in the form of cash and equivalent contributions.
7. Are Land Bank Authorities eligible for the Land Infrastructure Grants?
 - a. Any registered authority, city, or county that is compliant with state reporting requirements is eligible to apply for infrastructure funds.
8. Could land infrastructure be used for in-fill housing property acquisition, demolition, etc?
 - a. Infrastructure grants can be used to provide infrastructure improvements to in-fill housing developments but not for scattered sites. The funding will not pay for property acquisition or demolition. Infrastructure funds may only be used for new housing developments. The eligible activities are detailed in the Notice of Funding Availability.
9. Does the Uniform Relocation Act (URA) apply?
 - a. This project is not subject to the Uniform Relocation Act (URA); however, funding will not be awarded to projects that will result in the displacement of current residential or commercial occupants of the property.
10. Can a community apply for a grant to help fund land purchases, infrastructure, etc., and then a developer applies later for a construction loan for a project to go on the land that was purchased or improved by the community?
 - a. A community may apply for the infrastructure grant, and a developer could apply for the construction loan. The applications may be submitted at different times; however, both activities must be completed within the thirty (30) month time frame.
11. If we filed an extension for our FYE 2024 Audit, would we still be eligible to apply? The audit will be completed by June 30, 2025.
 - a. The applicant must be compliant at the time of the application and award. If an extension is provided, proof of that extension will be required to be submitted with the application.

12. Assuming an infrastructure grant applicant has a developer committed to build on the improved land, is there a timeline for construction of the housing after the infrastructure is in place?
 - a. It is expected that the infrastructure and housing development will occur within thirty months of the award.
13. What if our community needs a water plant and tower to accommodate building these developments? Does that count under infrastructure?
 - a. Potentially. It is incumbent upon the applicant and developer to convey all project-related information to DCA's regional representative at the time of the Initial Project Assessment. The OneGeorgia Authority will review all the information to determine whether the project could qualify under the circumstances surrounding the project.
14. With the multi-family housing component of the program, are there certain requirements in terms of a number of units, or is this limited to the local county/government?
 - a. This is a local decision, but the review process does consider the total grant request for the number of units proposed.
15. For the rural county site development, can infrastructure funds be used to install a septic system and drill/bore a well?
 - a. No.
16. When a home is sold that is on property that was purchased with infrastructure funds, do the proceeds come to the community, or do they go back to the state?
 - a. The home sale proceeds are not remitted to the state. The developer/owner may retain the sale proceeds to cover the development costs.

Rural Workforce Housing Initiative Construction Loan FAQ

1. Is the purpose of this program to provide an incentive to build workforce housing in areas where there isn't a demand? It seems that if there were a demand for workforce housing, the developers and builders would already be building there.
 - a. The purpose of the program is to enable the construction of workforce housing in areas of high demand due to job growth and a lack of adequate housing supply. While it would seem that the demand for housing would drive private development, the housing market developers are not meeting the demand quickly enough at costs that are low enough to be affordable for the workforce in these rural areas.
2. What is the URL to the website?
 - a. Please click the link to be directed to the website: [Equity Fund - Rural Workforce Housing Initiative Housing Construction Loan Program | Georgia Department of Community Affairs \(ga.gov\)](https://equityfund.ga.gov/rural-workforce-housing-initiative-housing-construction-loan-program)
3. Who can apply for the loan funds
 - a. All experienced non-profit, for-profit, and private developers are eligible to apply for the loan directly. They are required to have a letter of support or a resolution of support passed by the local government or the development authority for their project to be considered for funding.
4. When do we apply for construction loan funding?
 - a. For the construction loan, we accept applications on a rolling basis, which means they can apply anytime.
5. What are the loan terms?
 - a. The construction loan term is 30 months from the award date. The project must be completed, the house must be sold to the owner-occupied home buyer, and the loan must be repaid to DCA within that 30-month time frame.
6. What is the Interest rate for the loan funds?
 - a. Construction loan Interest rate will be between 0-3%, Interest rate will be determined after the full application is submitted during the loan underwriting process.
7. The 60% construction funding. Is that for infrastructure only, or are you also funding the housing?
 - a. The funding structure for the construction loan is as follows: 10% is from the builder/developer's cash equity, 40% is from Rural Workforce Housing Initiative Construction Loan Funds, and 50% is from a senior lender (Bank loan). For the construction loan portion, DCA will provide up to 40% financing or up to \$1,000,000 for construction loans. These funds can be used towards the construction of homes, not land acquisition.
8. Can the housing requirement be used to develop downtown housing, such as lofts?
 - a. Yes. The Rural Workforce Housing Initiative does not stipulate where the housing can be built, but will review the applicant's site plans for appropriateness, and the housing must meet local building codes and zoning requirements.
9. With these monies, will city ordinances and design standards be followed, or are they exempt?
 - a. Rural Workforce Housing Initiative-funded projects must follow local ordinances and codes.
10. Can a developer apply for the loan portion if there is no need for an infrastructure grant?
 - a. Yes, but it will still require a letter or resolution of support from the local government or

development authority.

11. As a developer, I would include clean energy in our projects. Are there any additional funding or programs to support clean energy?
 - a. No additional funds or incentives are provided to developments that exceed the state's green energy standards.
12. Is this for new projects only, or is it also available for projects currently under construction?
 - a. This program is for new projects only.
13. What kind of homes are we permitted to build using these funds?
 - a. The construction of single-family, modular, townhomes, and downtown upper-story residential is allowed.
14. Are there any USDA rural eligibility requirements?
 - a. No, there are no federal or other agency requirements unless that particular agency's funding is involved in the financing of the project.