

COMMISSION DEFINED OPTION:

SUBJECT: Neighborhood Leaders Program Contract

PURPOSE: To incorporate additional contractual requirements into the agreement between the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia, and Family Connection-Communities in Schools of Athens, Inc., (“FC-CIS”) for the purposes of operating the Neighborhood Leaders Program.

CDO:

1. The new contract for the Neighborhood Leaders Program shall include the following additional provisions:
 - a. Housing and Community Development (“HCD”) staff shall ensure that updates regarding the operation of the Neighborhood Leaders Program, including specific program data, shall be forwarded to the Mayor and Commission, either by HCD staff or FC-CIS staff, on at least a quarterly basis during the term of this Agreement.
 - b. Neighborhood Leaders shall be required to encourage and solicit community participation in surveys released by ACCGov in order to assist in gathering a representative sample of survey results to better inform ACCGov decision-making.
 - c. Neighborhood Leaders shall make efforts to build relationships with all ACCGov Commissioners. Neighborhood Leaders shall reach out to each Commissioner to open lines of direct communication and inquire as to the best way to communicate with each individual Commissioner.
 - d. Neighborhood Leaders shall explore grant writing opportunities for community projects.
 - e. The Neighborhood Leaders Program Coordinator shall be responsible for sharing voter registration with the Economic Justice Coalition and any other non-partisan voter registration organization. Additionally, the Coordinator shall assist in coordinating voter registration trainings in each zone.
 - f. The Mayor and Commission shall revisit and may revise the Neighborhood Leaders Program funding source for the 2024 budget.

**THE UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY
COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM**

SUBJECT: Neighborhood Leaders Contract Renewal

DATE: July 25, 2023

BUDGET INFORMATION:

REVENUES: N/A

EXPENSES:

ANNUAL: \$1,102,661 Neighborhood Leaders Program
\$1,102,661 Total

CAPITAL:

OTHER:

FUNDING SOURCE: FY24 HCD General Fund Operating Budget

COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED ON: September 5, 2023

PURPOSE:

To request that the Mayor and Commission:

- a. Approve contract renewal with Family Connection-Communities in Schools (FC-CIS) for the Neighborhood Leaders Program at the funding level provided by ACCGov’s FY24 annual budget, and based on updated scope of services and budget (**Attachments #2 and 3**); and,
- b. Authorize the Mayor and appropriate staff to execute all related documents.

HISTORY:

1. On June 4, 2019, the Mayor and Commission (M&C) approved the FY20 Operating and Capital Budgets for ACCGov, which included \$4 million of General Fund, Fund Balance for the creation of a “Prosperity Package.”
2. On June 13, 2019, the M&C held a retreat to discuss potential focus areas for the Prosperity Package. A presentation regarding early childhood education and workforce development opportunities was given. By general consensus, the M&C asked for further concept development.
3. On August 22, 2019, the M&C held a follow up meeting to the June retreat and received follow up information regarding the June concept. By general consensus, the M&C did not want to pursue the concept any further.

4. On September 19, 2019, the M&C held a second retreat to discuss the Prosperity Package. By general consensus, the M&C directed staff to develop a job description for a grant coordinator, develop a draft scope for a Neighborhood Leaders Program, as well as identified additional topic areas for further discussion.
5. On October 8, 2019, at their regularly scheduled work session regarding the Prosperity Package, the M&C reviewed the proposed job description for the grant coordinator positions, a draft scope for a Neighborhood Leaders Program, and discussed other potential areas of focus for the Prosperity Package. The M&C directed the Manager that the Neighborhood Leaders Program should progress as quickly as possible to cover the sixteen school empowerment zones. They further directed that a poverty simulation should be organized for the group.
6. On December 3, 2019, the M&C approved initial actions for the Prosperity Package, which included an \$800,000 allocation to initiate the Neighborhood Leaders Program. This initial allocation included approximately \$50,000 in start-up expenses.
7. On December 13, 2019, ACCGov executed a contract with Family Connections-Communities in Schools (FC-CIS) for the Neighborhood Leaders Program.
8. On July 7, 2020, under suspension of rules, the M&C approved the “Resiliency Package” to support COVID-19 response in our community. This action reallocated the undesignated \$3 million allocation from the “Prosperity Package.”
9. On June 15, 2021, the M&C adopted the FY22 Annual Budget, which included one-time funding to continue the Neighborhood Leaders Program.
10. Since 2022, FC-CIS has received a grant from the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) to expand the Neighborhood Leaders Program with an emphasis on increasing SNAP and WIC benefit utilization in Athens-Clarke County. This additional funding added two new Neighborhood Leaders and increased all the salaries of the Neighborhood Leaders.
11. On April 29, 2022, the Mayor released the FY23 Mayor Recommended Budget, which proposed to provide a \$750,000 allocation to sustain the Neighborhood Leaders Program on an annual basis.
12. On June 7, 2022, the Mayor and Commission approved the FY23 contract renewal with FC-CIS for the Neighborhood Leaders Program. The FY23 contract with FC-CIS is in sync with the ACCGov fiscal year and was established as a one-year contract renewable for up to four additional one-year terms.
13. On June 7, 2022, the Mayor and Commission approved an ordinance to amend the Housing and Community Development annual operating and capital budget to provide a \$79,000

supplemental increase for cost-of-living wage increases for the Neighborhood Leaders contract budget. Approval increased the FY22 Neighborhood Leaders budget and future contract budgets from \$750,000 to \$1,032,661.

14. In May 2023, FC-CIS submitted to staff an overview of FY23 successes, updated scope of services and goals for FY24, as well as three funding levels for M&C's consideration.
15. During the June 6, 2023 regular session, M&C voted to extend the existing FY23 Neighborhood Leaders contract for five months (ending in November 2023) to give FC-CIS sufficient time to present recent successes and future plans during an August work session, and provide M&C sufficient time to consider further extending the contract leading up to the September 5, 2023 regular session.
16. During the June 6, 2023 regular session, M&C approved the budget for FY24 which included an allocation of \$1,102,661 from general funds for the NL program (\$70,000 more than in FY23).
17. On June 27, 2023, HCD staff met with FC-CIS Executive Director Tim Johnson, NL Program Director Terris Thomas and FC-CIS Administrative Manager Cheri Smithson to discuss staff's recommendations to strengthen the NL program, make it easier to evaluate the programs impact, and increase understanding of the program among key stakeholders.
18. Between July 18, 2023 and August 3, 2023, HCD staff provided additional technical assistance to FC-CIS to ensure the updated scope of services, budget, and work session presentation were adequate for upcoming M&C actions.
19. During the August 10, 2023 M&C Work Session, FC-CIS Executive Director Tim Johnson and NL Program Director Terris Thomas presented on FY23 successes (**Attachment #1**), updated scope of services and performance measurements for FY24 (**Attachment #2**).

FACTS & ISSUES:

1. With ACCGov funding, the Neighborhood Leaders Program employs sixteen individuals serving each of the sixteen elementary school attendance zones to help residents access services and resources (education, employment opportunities, early care & learning, SNAP and WIC access, physical and behavioral health services, civic engagement, and other). Additionally, the program employs two additional Neighborhood Leaders that focus solely on enrolling ACC households in SNAP as part of a SNAP Outreach Partnership GA DFCS grant.
2. Neighborhood Leaders also engage residents in community-building: providing input into community planning and their needs and aspirations (including family and neighborhood), responding to the Census, registering to vote, voting, engaging in neighborhood and other community organizations, and related civic activities.

3. The FY23 contract included a number of updates that will continue to improve the program. These include:
 - a) Maintaining contract term dates with the ACCGov fiscal year;
 - b) Maintaining the contract as a one-year contract renewable for up to four additional one-year terms (ending in FY27);
 - c) Maintaining the current contract of monthly draw payments instead of pre-reimbursements so program funding is steady so long as expenses and work meet the minimum commitments.
 - d) Incorporating a performance matrix to update and improve monthly reporting; and,
 - e) Maintaining language that permits the Manager to increase or decrease the annual scope of work to match any change in funding from the M&C.

4. Some of the key outputs from the Neighborhood Leaders program in FY23, as reported by FC-CIS in monthly indicator reports and in **Attachment #1**, include:
 - Neighborhood leaders provided case management for 5,542 residents, helping to address needs around housing, food assistance, assistance obtaining public benefits (e.g., SNAP), childcare, healthcare, employment, civic engagement and more.
 - Enrolled 1,047 Athens-Clarke County households in SNAP during the program's first year (1,000 in FY23), at an annual value of \$7,086,096.
 - 176 community needs identified and reported to ACCGov, 73% of which were addressed.
 - Collaborations with 208 agencies, programs and departments, including: DFCS, Athens Area Diaper Bank, Ga Department of Public Health, Goodwill, Clarke County Library, Brightpaths, ACCGov Fire Department, and ACCGov Housing & Community Development, among others

5. The data that Neighborhood Leaders continuously collect through their daily interactions with residents sheds important light into the status of our community's wellbeing. For example, resident's needs greatly outweigh the availability of local resources:
 - 5% of households assisted with finding housing were able to find housing
 - 8% of households pre-screened for SNAP were deemed eligible for the public benefit
 - 20% of households looking for childcare are able to find it
 - 19% of households assisted with finding healthcare were able to find it

6. To strengthen the NL program, better serve community need, and improve evaluation and communication of program successes starting in FY24, FC-CIS has enhanced its scope of services (**Attachment #2**) to incorporate several of staff's recommendations, including:
 - a) Defined food insecurity, housing insecurity, physical and mental health, and employment as the **four priority areas of focus** on which the NLs will spend the majority of their time and established performance outcome measures for each need (see Fact & Issue #7). These areas are key indicators of poverty and were the most active areas for NLs in FY23. The NLs will continue to assist residents with other needs that contribute to

poverty (e.g., child care, transportation), but most proactive efforts will focus on the four priorities.

- b) Provide **specialized and regular training** to NLs focused on (1) core competencies and skills needed for NLs to be effective in their role, like communication, outreach, and community education; and (2) the four prioritized community needs (food, housing, health and employment). This training will help increase the NLs' knowledge of these issues and available resources.
- c) In collaboration with ACCGov staff, **improve data collection tools** to more accurately measure key performance outcomes, maintain individual case management, and track community outreach efforts.
- d) **Share program successes** more regularly through an updated public dashboard, quarterly reports/newsletters, and an annual Work Session with M&C.

7. The FY24 Neighborhood Leaders scope of work (**Attachment #2**) also includes measurable performance goals based on key indicators captured during FY23 that are focused on the FY24 priority areas of need. These goals, set by FC-CIS, will help facilitate the evaluation of the program on an annual basis, and include:

Program-wide:

- o In FY24, the goal is for Neighborhood Leaders to manage 6,000 cases, an increase of 8.2% from the previous year;
- o Neighborhood Leaders collaborated with 208 agencies, programs, and departments in FY23. The goal in FY24, is for Neighborhood Leaders to collaborate with 230 agencies, programs, and departments.

Food Insecurity:

- o In FY24, pre-screen 16,000 potential SNAP applicants (vs. 15,620 in the first 11 months of FY23).
- o In FY24, enroll and/or re-enroll 1,000 into SNAP, an increase of 4.7% from FY23.
- o In FY24, distribute fresh produce and other healthy food to at least 4,200 households in partnership with existing food distributions (vs. 4,000 in FY23)
- o In FY24, Neighborhood Leaders will host or participate in at least 4 community-wide meetings, trainings, discussions and/or strategic planning activities focused on food insecurity.

Housing Insecurity:

- o In FY24, assist 1,000 residents with education, referral, security, legal, and other information related to housing (vs. 604 in FY23).
- o In FY24, assist 100% of residents who request assistance enrolling in Public Housing and Section 8 programs.
- o In FY24, provide referrals to shelter and other homeless services to 100% of residents who request such assistance from Neighborhood Leaders.
- o In FY24, Neighborhood Leaders will host or participate in at least 4 community-wide meetings, trainings, discussions and/or strategic planning activities focused on housing insecurity.

Physical and Mental Health

- In FY24, provide health and healthcare information and screenings to 7,200 residents (vs. 7,056 in FY23).
- In FY24, provide screening and assistance in health insurance and other benefits enrollment to 100% of residents who request such assistance.
- In FY24, at least 25% of residents who received assistance finding healthcare will have new/renewed access to healthcare providers (vs. 23% in the first 11 months of FY23).
- In FY24, Neighborhood Leaders will host or participate in at least 4 community-wide meetings, trainings, discussions and/or strategic planning activities focused on physical and mental health.

Employment

- In FY24, provide one-to-one employment assistance and referrals to at least 500 residents (vs. 296 individuals who received job referrals and other workforce development assistance in FY23).
- In FY24, assist 1,950 individuals with finding employment by providing information about job opportunities and related resources (vs. 1,700 in 2023)
- In FY24, at least 150 residents that receive Neighborhood Leaders’ support surrounding employment will find employment (vs. 143 in FY23)
- In FY24, Neighborhood Leaders will participate in at least 4 community-wide meetings, trainings, discussions and/or strategic planning activities focused on employment.

Additionally, FC-CIS will conduct confidential Resident Satisfaction Surveys among a sample of ACC residents served by NLS to better evaluate NLS’ individual performance and the program as a whole.

8. Even with the DFCS supplemental grant (History #10), FC-CIS reports that the Neighborhood Leaders Program costs more to operate than ACCGov provides in annual funding. This results in FC-CIS having to raise outside funding to sustain the program. If no changes are implemented in FY24, the overall program will have the following fiscal position:

\$ 1,032,661	Contribution from ACCGov
\$ 500,000	In-kind Donations (printing and supplies, and items distributed by NLS)
\$ 175,881	DFCS SNAP Outreach Grant
<u>\$ 38,172</u>	<u>Total Required from Fund Raising or Program Reductions</u>
\$ 1,746,714	Annual Operating Expenses for the Neighborhood Leaders Program

9. FC-CIS reports that they have asked DFCS for a continuation and increase in funding for the SNAP Outreach initiative (DFCS grant year: Oct 2023 – Sept 2024). While not guaranteed, FC-CIS remains optimistic about this opportunity. Should FC-CIS receive increased DFCS funding and non-DFCS eligible expenses are less than ACCGov funds, FC-CIS remains committed to reimburse ACCGov for the difference.
10. With the additional \$70,000 allocation granted by M&C as part of the FY24 annual budget (History #16), FC-CIS will be able to provide 4% pay raises and 4% increase in benefit costs

for all Neighborhood Leaders and program director, cover increased costs in rent, payroll services and other expenses, and provide additional training opportunities to NLS
(Attachment #3).

11. This recommendation is consistent with the following Organizational Strategic Plan Strategies, Goals, and Initiatives
- e) Initiative 1-E-1: Target health and nutrition education programming to priority populations.
 - f) Initiative 1-E-2: Increase SNAP & WIC utilization.
 - g) Initiative 1-F-2: Extend ACCGov's reach into the community.
 - h) Initiative 2-B-2: Amplify partnership with Neighborhood Leaders.
 - i) Initiative 2-C-2: Partner directly with and listen to residents at the neighborhood level.

OPTIONS:

- 1. Mayor and Commission:
 - a. Approve contract renewal with Family Connection-Communities in Schools (FC-CIS) for the Neighborhood Leaders Program at the funding level provided by ACCGov's FY24 annual budget, and based on updated scope of services and budget (**Attachments #2 and 3**); and,
 - b. Authorize the Mayor and appropriate staff to execute all related documents
- 2. Mayor and Commission deny the budget contract renewal for the Neighborhood Leaders Program.
- 3. Mayor and Commission defined option.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDED ACTION: Option 1 a & b

DEPARTMENT: Housing & Community Development

Prepared by: Alejandra Calva



Roderick Wallace
Director
Housing & Community Development

7/27/23

Date:

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION: Option 1 a & b



Manager

August 10, 2023

Date:

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment #1 – FY23 Neighborhood Leaders Accomplishments

Attachment #2 – FY24 Neighborhood Leaders Scope of Services and Performance Measures

Attachment #3 – FY24 Neighborhood Leaders Budget



NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS: ACCGOV PARTNERS ADDRESSING POVERTY AND RELATED ISSUES

EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS

*The Neighborhood Leaders' partnership with the Athens-Clarke County Unified Government is remarkable. Neighborhood Leaders – of, in, and with the community – are helping address **17 of the strategic goals in the ACCGov Strategic Plan** adopted by the Mayor & Commission. They bring **millions of dollars into the community** to support individuals and families, with **significant community economic impact**. They help residents **address underlying issues for individuals to move out of poverty**, and engage with ACCGov and others to **address system issues contributing to poverty**. They **strengthen the work of other organizations** through those connections and collaboration. And they are **strengthening connections** for residents to feel more a part of the Athens-Clarke County community.*

In FY 2024, we will build on these successes in our continued partnership with ACCGov, working in and with the community to help transform lives for individuals, neighborhoods, and our entire community.

Among their accomplishments:

- In FY 2023, Neighborhood Leaders provided **case management to 5,542 residents**.
- In FY 2023, Neighborhood Leaders **collaborated with more than 200 agencies, programs, and departments**.
- In the first year of a collaboration with DFCS, Neighborhood Leaders **enrolled 1,047 ACC households in SNAP**, an **annualized total of \$7,086,096** to provide food to our highest need households and freeing money for medicine, school supplies, utilities, rent, and other needs. That is primarily spent locally, adding a significant multiplier effect for our local economy.
- In partnership with the Athens Area Diaper Bank, **Neighborhood Leaders provide more than 100,000 diapers/year** to Athens-Clarke County households.
- Neighborhood Leaders distributed **more than \$270,000 in donated goods** from a national partner, including coats, gloves, socks, underwear, adult diapers, school supplies, work gear, face masks, kitchen ware, cleaning supplies, and other.
- Neighborhood Leaders are key local leaders in the **Georgia Department of Public Health's CDC-funded PREVAYL youth violence prevention program**.
- Neighborhood Leaders have **Narcan kits and fentanyl testing strips** which were provided with training by the NE Health District's Opioid Public Health Analyst.
- We partner with the **Athens Area Community Foundation and its Resilient Northeast Georgia initiative** for the community to become more trauma-informed, partnered in its **Stronger Together Summit** drawing more than 150 leaders, and are partnering with them for the **Northeast Georgia Teen Summit** scheduled for July 12th.
- Neighborhood Leaders received training from the **Federal Reserve Bank** in the **CLIFF career and benefits tool** which will be helpful in our work with residents struggling to get out of poverty.
- Neighborhood Leaders hosted **thirty-six tiered events – Resource Fairs and similar outreach –in high-poverty neighborhoods** where residents could easily access them. Dozens of community

partner agencies joined us in tabling, sharing resources and information, and assisting in accessing benefits and services.

- Our Neighborhood Leader in **Winterville** established a **community assistance center** in space donated by the city, providing enrollment in SNAP and other benefits, workshops, food, and other goods and supports to residents.
- Neighborhood Leaders hosted forums to reduce stigma and connect residents to **mental health services**, with hundreds of live local viewers on virtual sessions on African American mental health.
- A Neighborhood Leader organized a **mental health for high school students** at Cedar Shoals High School that engaged the entire student body.
- Neighborhood Leader-organized **fire safety and smoke detector installation events provide hundreds of residents increased safety**, through partnerships with the **ACC Fire Department, Red Cross, and others.**
- Neighborhood Leaders have been selected for **LEAD Athens** in three consecutive years, and the program director was inducted into the **Athens Rotary Club** this year.
- Neighborhood Leaders work with UGA's **Project EITC** to help residents receive **the Earned Income Tax Credit**, which can bring thousands of dollars to a single household (but only if it is applied for), with significant local economic impact.
- Neighborhood Leaders partner with ACC Solid Waste in the **“cover your load”** education and provide the tarps where needed.
- Neighborhood Leaders have organized multiple **neighborhood cleanups with ACC Clean & Beautiful**, and have publicized and participated in others.
- Seven Neighborhood Leaders and the director received extensive training to facilitate the research-based **Circle of Security parenting framework for families with young children who've suffered trauma.**
- Neighborhood Leaders provide benefits enrollment and other resources through regular tabling with partner organizations, including **Goodwill and the ACC Library.** Their biweekly, bilingual tabling at **Brightpaths** draws long lines of families with young children each session.
- We partner with **Early Head Start/Head Start** to recruit and refer eligible families.
- Neighborhood Leaders recruit potential **foster parents** to help address the severe shortage of foster homes.
- Neighborhood Leaders serve in many local leadership capacities, including **Local School Governance Teams (two chair or co-chair), non-profit boards of directors, ACCGov advisory committees, and others.**
- Neighborhood Leaders provided **fresh produce and other healthy food to more than 4,000** households, partnering with Mt. Olive to provide **food distributions to local families**, partnering with Mount Olive Seventh Day Adventist and other faith organizations, Concrete Jungle, UGArden, and others.
- In addition to scores of community presentations, a Neighborhood Leader was an **invited presenter at the southeast region Gulf South Summit**, and the program director was an **invited presenter at the Georgia Family Connection Partnership Biennial Conference.**
- **Many impacts – a sense of connection and community among residents historically disenfranchised, for example – are not easily measured but can be transformational.**

###



NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS: ACCGOV PARTNERS ADDRESSING POVERTY AND RELATED ISSUES

FY24 Scope of Services

In partnership with the Athens-Clarke County Mayor, Commission, and staff, Neighborhood Leaders are of the community, in the community, working with the community to address poverty, social disparity, and wealth inequality.

Purpose: The partnership utilizes Family Connection-Communities In Schools Neighborhood Leaders to support community engagement and navigation for the Mayor & Commission's initiatives to address poverty, social disparity, and wealth inequality in Athens-Clarke County, and to support implementation of ACCGov's Strategic Plan. (Neighborhood Leaders address 17 of the strategic goals in the plan.)

Time period: The current version of the program launched with the Mayor & Commission funding in January 2020 and went to scale at the beginning of March 2020. When the state of emergency was declared in that same month, Neighborhood Leaders were key respondents. They are fulfilling and exceeding expectations. The partnership has continued, switching to a fiscal year contract in FY 2023, and the intent is for the partnership to continue and expand as long as it continues to be effective.

Staffing and Personnel:

- **Neighborhood Leaders Project Director:** Full-time position to oversee the project (with Family Connection-Communities In Schools executive director), including recruiting, hiring, and training of Neighborhood Leaders; ongoing supervision; assuring of ongoing data collection and updating; timely reporting; engagement with partners; and related duties.
- **Sixteen Neighborhood Leaders** paid by ACCGov funding, plus 2 additional Neighborhood Leaders paid by SNAP Outreach Partnership with GA DFCS grant. FC-CIS Neighborhood Leaders are *of* the community, *in* the community, working *with* the community to provide ongoing support for the Mayor & Commission's initiative to reduce poverty, social disparity, and wealth inequality in Athens-Clarke County. The most important qualifications for the role of Neighborhood Leader are knowledge of the community (including services), life experience and cultural background that connects with those with whom they're working, interpersonal skills, and a heart for the work. FC-CIS Neighborhood Leaders serve in each of 16 Prosperity Zones, working with residents to achieve *their* aspirations.

Program Activities:

Neighborhood Leaders provide information, referral, navigation, case management, and community engagement for residents. They also help inform the Mayor & Commission and community partners about systemic barriers to prosperity.

The Neighborhood Leaders primarily serve their 16 zones, with flexibility as needed (for example, a Spanish-speaking Neighborhood Leader crossing zones, expertise on a particular issue, and multi-zone or community-wide events).

Through a federally funded SNAP Outreach Partnership with the Georgia Division of Family & Children Services, two additional FTE Neighborhood Leader positions serve county-wide to enroll eligible households in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. It also supports the 16 zone-specific Neighborhood Leaders. This partnership and others provide significant additional support for the goals of the Prosperity Package.

With an emphasis on removing barriers to economic self-sufficiency, Neighborhood Leaders help residents access services and resources, including but not limited to education (basic adult education, ESL, GED, job training), employment opportunities, early care & learning including quality child care, rent assistance/housing, support for the aging, SNAP and WIC, physical and behavioral health services, needed commodities (child & adult diapers, winter wear, work gloves, food, cell phones, school supplies, other), civic engagement (including Athens Wellbeing Project, voter registration, voting, and engaging in public processes), and others. This is done in two tiers:

- Tier 1 includes group outreach, such as information-sharing through presentations in neighborhoods and at community gatherings, hosting resource fairs (including at the neighborhood level in neighborhoods long neglected), tabling at community events and venues, and other outreach.
- Tier 2 is individual case management support, working with (not just for) individuals of all ages and families to: identify economic and other goals, connect to needed services, access the services as appropriate (including assistance in filling out application paperwork if needed), and follow up to ascertain the status of their individual plan, if they got the service(s), what if any outcomes resulted, and to offer further assistance.

Neighborhood Leaders also engage residents in community-building. This includes providing in-the-community expertise for the Mayor and Commission, providing input into other community planning (HCD and other Unified Government departments' planning, Athens Wellbeing Project, Envision Athens, Family Connection-CIS Strategic Action Teams, other), engaging in neighborhood and other community organizations, registering to vote, voting, and other civic activities. This is incorporated into both Tier 1 and Tier 2 work.

Neighborhood Leaders receive extensive, ongoing professional training in core competencies and specialized training related to services and needs.

FY24 Improvements: To strengthen the NL program, better serve community needs, and improve evaluation and communication of program successes, starting in FY24, FC-CIS will implement the following improvements to the program.

1. Define Prioritized Areas of Focus

Poverty is complex. Individuals and families face a myriad of interrelated issues and challenges, both personal and systemic. Neighborhood Leaders assist with navigating and referring to services, accessing resources (for example, taking food boxes to homes without transportation), and informing decision-makers about systemic barriers. They address scores of specific issues with those they serve. We have learned that by attempting to share as much information on the Neighborhood Leaders' work as practical, it is challenging for ACCGov

and the public to clearly see the impact. By defining priority areas of focus, we will make it easier to see the impact.

Neighborhood Leaders will have four priority areas of focus: food, housing, health, and employment. Among the ways we address these are utilizing CLIFF (Career Ladder Identifier & Financial Forecaster) tools developed by the Federal Reserve, which provided the tools and training in their use. These tools address the benefits cliff (at certain levels of income, increased pay can actually decrease household income due to loss of public benefits) and provide ways to understand and move from survival to thriving.

The priority areas of focus, the vision, and examples of the ways Neighborhood Leaders address them, as well as related performance measurements that will be reported on monthly:

- **Food insecurity:** *We envision a community where every resident has affordable, accessible, healthy food.* Examples of work in this area include:
 - SNAP and WIC enrollment
 - Navigating all food systems
 - Distribution of donated food to households and individuals in need
 - Addressing CLIFF with individuals, employers, and systems
 - Strategic engagement in systemically addressing food insecurity

FY24 Performance Measurements:

- In FY24, pre-screen 16,000 potential SNAP applicants (vs. 15,620 in the first 11 months of FY23).
- In FY24, enroll and/or re-enroll 1,000 into SNAP, an increase of 4.7% from FY23.
- In FY24, distribute fresh produce and other healthy food to at least 4,200 households in partnership with existing food distributions (vs. 4,000 in FY23)
- In FY24, Neighborhood Leaders will host or participate in at least 4 community-wide meetings, trainings, discussions and/or strategic planning activities focused on food insecurity.

- **Housing insecurity:** *We envision a community where every resident has safe, affordable residence.* Examples of work in this area include:
 - Identification and connection with affordable housing, such as AHA, Section 8 and tax subsidized private, Habitat, Athens Land Trust, and other
 - Assist in enrollment in Public Housing and Section 8
 - Connection with shelter and services for unsheltered
 - Addressing CLIFF with individuals, employers, and systems
 - Strategic engagement in systemically addressing housing insecurity

FY24 Performance Measurements:

- In FY24, assist 1,000 residents with education, referral, security, legal, and other information related to housing (vs. 604 in FY23).

- In FY24, assist 100% of residents who request assistance enrolling in Public Housing and Section 8 programs.
 - In FY24, provide referrals to shelter and other homeless services to 100% of residents who request such assistance from Neighborhood Leaders.
 - In FY24, Neighborhood Leaders will host or participate in at least 4 community-wide meetings, trainings, discussions and/or strategic planning activities focused on housing insecurity.
- **Physical and mental health:** *We envision a community where every resident receives appropriate preventive and interventive mental and physical health services.* Examples of work in this area include:
 - Enrollment in health insurance – Medicaid, Peachcare, Medicare, ACA Exchange
 - Connection with free and sliding scale health services
 - Continuing work to destigmatize mental health challenges
 - Addressing CLIFF with individuals, employers, and systems
 - Strategic engagement in systemically addressing health issues (including promoting students of color entering the mental health field)

FY24 Performance Measurements:

- In FY24, provide health and healthcare information and screenings to 7,200 residents (vs. 7,056 in FY23).
 - In FY24, provide screening and assistance in health insurance and other benefits enrollment to 100% of residents who request such assistance.
 - In FY24, at least 25% of residents who received assistance finding healthcare will have new/renewed access to healthcare providers (vs. 23% in the first 11 months of FY23).
 - In FY24, Neighborhood Leaders will host or participate in at least 4 community-wide meetings, trainings, discussions and/or strategic planning activities focused on physical and mental health.
- **Employment:** *We envision a community where every resident is able to gain productive employment and thrive.* Examples of work in this area include:
 - Connecting residents with job openings
 - Connecting employers with applicants
 - Connecting residents with education and training opportunities focused on job market and living wages
 - Connecting residents with supports for employment (transportation, child care, other)
 - Addressing CLIFF with individuals, employers, and systems
 - Strategic engagement in systemically addressing employment needs

FY24 Performance Measurements:

- In FY24, provide one-to-one employment assistance and referrals to at least 500 residents (vs. 296 individuals who received job referrals and other workforce development assistance in FY23).

- In FY24, assist 1,950 individuals with finding employment by providing information about job opportunities and related resources (vs. 1,700 in 2023)
- In FY24, at least 150 residents that receive Neighborhood Leaders' support surrounding employment will find employment (vs. 143 in FY23)
- In FY24, Neighborhood Leaders will participate in at least 4 community-wide meetings, trainings, discussions and/or strategic planning activities focused on employment.

2. Improve Reporting and Impact Measures

ACCGov has developed and maintains an online case management system for Neighborhood Leaders that includes a dashboard of data available to staff and Mayor & Commission. FC-CIS has provided monthly Indicator Reports since FY22. In FY24, FC-CIS will continue to work with ACCGov staff to update and improve this system to provide better support for case management and better reporting on the work. This includes:

- Improve data collection instruments for individual case management (with privacy-protecting identification numbers) to better track individual cases, and community-level work.
- Report monthly on the following performance measurements and program outcomes:
 - All performance measurements outlined above for each prioritized area of focus;
 - All “tracked outcomes” included in Logic Model below;
 - In FY24, the goal is for Neighborhood Leaders to manage 6,000 cases, an increase of 8.2% from the previous year;
 - Neighborhood Leaders collaborated with 208 agencies, programs, and departments in FY23. The goal in FY24, is for Neighborhood Leaders to collaborate with 230 agencies, programs, and departments.
- Implement Resident Satisfaction Surveys among sampled residents served by Neighborhood Leaders. This will help evaluate impact of individual Neighborhood Leaders and the larger program.

3. Provide targeted ongoing training to Neighborhood Leaders.

While Neighborhood Leaders have regularly completed trainings on a variety of topics, in FY24, FC-CIS will facilitate additional training to include:

- Training on core competencies/skills used by similar professions, such as Community Health Workers. Training will cover skills such as communication, interpersonal/relationship-building, service coordination and navigation, capacity-building, advocacy, education and facilitation, individual and community assessment, outreach, professional skills and conduct, evaluation and research, and knowledge base on relevant topics.
- FC-CIS will leverage its relationships with local agencies to offer trainings focused on the four prioritized areas of focus (food, housing, health, and employment).

4. Share Successes More Accessibly and Regularly

In addition to monthly reporting submitted to ACCGov, as described in the contract:

- *Updated dashboard:* FC-CIS will work with ACCGov to update the existing Neighborhood Leaders Overview Dashboard to reflect the four prioritized areas of focus and their respective performance measures. Our goal includes making the dashboard

more readily available to the public with safeguards to assure protection of privacy of those served (currently only those with the exact link can access it).

- *Quarterly Report/Update:* FC-CIS will develop quarterly reports/updates of NL activities that include key metrics from the dashboard, highlights of successes and resident testimonials, upcoming initiatives, funding sources and spending to date, and photos. FC-CIS may also share these documents with potential funders and on its website, and ACCGov staff may submit it to M&C for quarterly review.
- *Engagement with M&C:*
 - FC-CIS invites all Commissioners individually to shadow a Neighborhood Leader for a day (or part of a day).
 - Neighborhood Leaders are available to meet with their Commissioners for one-on-one conversations about their work and the needs of the residents they serve.
 - FC-CIS invites all Commissioners to meet in groups of 3 or 4 at a time with all Neighborhood Leaders for conversations.
- *Annual M&C Work Session:* With the intent to help ensure that M&C better understand the Neighborhood Leaders activities and impact on community prior to the annual ACCGov budget process, FC-CIS shall present on program accomplishments in the year prior and plans for the upcoming fiscal year during a M&C Work Session in January-March.

Program Logic Model: See next page.

Proposed Budget for FY24: \$1,102,661.00, as allocated in FY24 ACCGov Budget

Category	Description	Allocation
Salaries & Benefits	Current Neighborhood Leaders and program director with 4% pay raises and 4% increase in benefit costs	\$865,054
Communications	Cell phone service	\$12,180
Organizational Insurance	Required under ACC contract	\$9,500
Payroll Services	Contracted service	\$5,400
Supplies, Outreach, and Equipment	Office supplies, replacement for laptops, supplies for community resource fairs, printing, and similar costs, plus replacement of cell phones.	\$38,000
Travel and Training	Travel (primarily local mileage), training	\$44,285
Facility cost	Neighborhood Leaders Hub facility (reimburse owner for cost, less share paid by DFCS), utilities, upkeep	\$28,000
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>\$1,002,419</i>
Indirect @10% (standard)	For program share of audit, bookkeeping, and other shared expenses	\$100,242
Total		\$1,102,661

Neighborhood Leaders Logic Model

As community engagers, the FC-CIS Neighborhood Leaders who are OF, IN and WITH the Athens community, serve in each of the 16 Prosperity Zones to help community members connect to resources and opportunities to reach their aspirations and work to address poverty and other challenges using the Bridges Out of Poverty framework. In building trusted relationships with residents in each zone and collaborative relationships with partnering agencies and organizations, Neighborhood Leaders collect and share information specifics regarding opportunities, resources, etc. with residents. Neighborhood Leaders respond to the ongoing emergent needs of residents. Additionally, they provide resident input/feedback to those agencies and organizations.

Types of Engagement	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Tracked Outcomes
<p>Individual and Household-Level Case Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 Neighborhood Leaders • Director of the Neighborhood Leaders • Materials and supplies from the Hub • Resource lists • Neighborhood Leader training on various resources (SNAP, WIC, unemployment, disability, EITC, housing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLs will submit at least 8 clientele specific case note entries weekly including a follow up contact, information sharing and resource connection • All documentation (SNAP reports, online tool submission, NL indicator measurement template, weekly work schedules) will be submitted to director by 5 PM on Monday of each week • Director will use Google form to track completion of case management • Have a standing agenda item for NL meetings to discuss zone specific details, events and needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of people served • # of referrals made by agency • # of follow ups completed • # of action plans completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of people assisted who found employment • # of people served who secured childcare • # of people served who received health care they needed • # of residents screened who were eligible and whose SNAP, WIC, CAPS and Medicaid applications completed using the Gateway System • # of residents connected to housing resources

Types of Engagement	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Tracked Outcomes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with individuals and families to develop action plans 		
Community Outreach and Information Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 Neighborhood Leaders • Director of the Neighborhood Leaders • Time spent planning • Supplies for meetings • Location for meetings and events • Resource or informational flyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host group outreach zone events (quarterly) • Host monthly community meetings • Collaborate with other agencies to host events • Zone canvassing • Presentations with or for community collaborators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of community meetings /neighborhood tiered events held and attended • # of attendees per event/presentation held • # of surveys completed (if participating in data collection) • # of collaborations or partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of meetings/events where attendance and agenda goals were reached • % of collaborations result in long-term partnerships
Civic Engagement and Public Input Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 Neighborhood Leaders • Director of the Neighborhood Leaders • Commissioner for specific zone • NL Strategic Connector Groups, including Housing (homelessness, tenant rights, eviction prevention), Education (PreK, K-12, College, Post-Secondary), Health & Wellness, Latina/o Community, and Safety & Community Stability. • ACCGov departments and community partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify zone specific needs • NLs will meet with their commissioner to discuss zone specific needs quarterly • NLs will share public input with commissioners during their quarterly meetings • Commissioners will be invited in small groups to join NL meetings • NLs will attend various meetings in the community • NL Strategic Connector Group meetings • NLs will plan, develop and implement FC-CIS Family, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of voters registered • # of committees/board positions held by NLs • # of meetings held/ attended with policy makers • # of NL full staff meetings with small group of commissioners • # of reports submitted to the Mayor and Commission with recommendations/reporting the needs for each zone • # of connector group meetings • # of solutions carried out from connector meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of eligible residents served who newly register to vote • # of identified needs met for each specific zone • # of identified community needs specifically addressed in FC-CIS and other community plans

Types of Engagement	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Tracked Outcomes
		<p>Community & Neighborhood Engagement Strategic Action Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If resources are provided, NLs will organize and implement Youth Neighborhood Leadership Program • NLs will engage in Envision Athens work groups, all FC-CIS Strategic Action Teams, Homeless Coalition, Local School Governance Teams, and other strategic planning • NLs will work with ACCGov departments for outreach on services and input on ways to strengthen connection and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of EA work groups, FC-CIS SATs, Homeless Coalition committees, other strategic planning with NL engagement • # of ACCGov departments partnering with NLs for outreach/engagement • ACC Mayor & Commission work session presentations from NL program • # of zone specific needs identified • # of ideas for solutions for specific needs • # of collaborations or connections made to help with need 	
<p>NL Professional Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 Neighborhood Leaders • Director of the Neighborhood Leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend trainings and educational opportunities pertaining to NL job • Participate on local committees and boards as members and in leadership roles (Committee Chair, President, Vice-President, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of certifications/training certificates NLs receive • # of opportunities presented to NLs because of their training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of NLs who obtain training or professional development through the NL program • % of NLs promoted to other positions because of their time and training in the program



**NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS:
ACCGOV PARTNERS
ADDRESSING POVERTY AND
RELATED ISSUES**

FY24 Proposed Budget

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