

CANAL COMMONS
GREEN RIVER, UT

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL RESPONSE

RURAL  PROUD

EPICENTER

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OUR ORGANIZATION

Founded in 2009, Epicenter is a community development organization that serves the rural town of Green River, Utah. Our approach is locally driven, human-centric, and holistic. Our goal is to help the community use its strengths and assets to overcome its challenges, and we believe the community's greatest strength is its people. Epicenter believes by catalyzing community discussions, listening to residents, and responding with smart, strategic, and sustainable commitments, we can help residents create the vibrant community they envision.

PROJECT STAFF

Maria Sykes
Executive Director

Lindsey Briceno, AIA
Project Manager

Steph Crabtree
Construction Manager

CONTACT US

www.ruralandproud.org
info@ruralandproud.org
(435) 564-3330

 Epicenter

 ruralandproud



City of Green River
460 East Main Street (PO Box 620)
Green River, Utah 84525

RE: Residential Development Project - Request for Proposals
Epicenter's RFP Application

With this letter, Epicenter is pleased to submit its proposal to the City of Green River for a residential development project on the City's 3.2-acre plot of land located one block southeast of Main Street in Green River, Utah: Canal Commons.

In addition to meeting the City of Green River's goal of developing new entry-level housing options either for sale or rent, we offer a proposal that will also continue Epicenter's mission of bringing high-quality residential design to Green River. Our proposal will result in 10 new housing units with all of the units affordable to households with incomes at 50% or below the area median income. Our proposal prioritizes current and recent residents, especially our community's growing families, senior citizens, and the many young adults who have contacted me looking to stay or move back home in order to build their life here rather than in the big city.

The enclosed materials demonstrate our experience and ability to meet the City's goals for developing this site. Epicenter has a ten year history of successes in developing projects of varying scales in Green River. Key strengths of our team include:

- A core leadership of designers living and working in Green River who have deep personal and professional knowledge of the community and region;
- Demonstrated ability to secure and manage complex financing sources and resources;
- Understanding the importance of providing high-quality and place-specific design to our projects. Epicenter is noted for its thoughtful and award-winning design projects and housing programs that feature high quality design which responds to both the assets and challenges of Green River.

Epicenter and our partners have extensive experience in collaborating with local residents, outside resources and experts, and the City on desirable projects and programs. We are excited to partner with Rocky Mountain Community Reinvestment Corporation, Enterprise Community Partners, the Rural Community Assistance Corporation, and other entities identified in this proposal to make this residential development not only a success in itself, but also a project that catalyzes even more well-designed housing for Green River residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions on our proposal.

Sincerely,



Maria Sykes
Epicenter Executive Director

PROJECT TEAM

Maria Sykes
Executive Director
Lindsey Briceno, AIA
Project Manager
Steph Crabtree
Construction Manager

David Watkins
Chief Financial Officer
John Montgomery
Chief Risk Officer

Kendrick Thomas, PE, SE
Structural Depart. Manager
Jeremy Dye, PE
Senior Project Engineer

Jason Wheeler, AIA
Joshua Rowley
Ruth Linford
Ren Hatt, JD
Dijana Alickovic, AIA
Ethan Migliori
Shaleane Gee, PhD

Rhoda Stauffer
Ben Riley
Rowe Zwahlen
Michele Weaver
Mark Matel
Dave Conine

DEVELOPER | ARCHITECT | PROPERTY MANAGER

EPICENTER STAFF

Epicenter's staff will manage and ensure coordination throughout all phases of the project by using key staff for oversight in areas of architectural design, construction management, and property management.

FINANCIAL PARTNER

ROCKY MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT CORP.

Rocky Mountain Community Reinvestment Corp's proven track record of financing affordable housing projects throughout the west will ensure ample cash flow and access to necessary capital.

ENGINEER

JONES & DEMILLE ENGINEERING

Currently contracted to execute civil site analysis, Jones and DeMille will provide a preliminary site design and cost estimates in order to ensure the site is engineered to address such potentially complicated aspects as water mitigation.

OVERSIGHT | COMPLIANCE

EPICENTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Experts in law, architecture, affordable housing, and finances. Epicenter's Board of Directors will meet bimonthly to provide oversight and ensure compliance throughout the project from predevelopment to post-construction.

CONSULTATION

ADVISORS

Epicenter has enlisted expert advisors to counsel pro bono on both specific aspects (eg. Community Development Block Grant) of and generally on the project proposed.





EPICENTER

180 S. Broadway (PO Box 444)
Green River, UT 84525
(435) 564-3330
info@ruralandproud.org
ruralandproud.org

LEADERSHIP

Maria Sykes
Executive Director & Co-Founder

Jason Wheeler, AIA
Board Chair

Joshua Rowley
Board Vice Chair

Ruth Linford
Board Treasurer

Ren Hatt, JD
Board Secretary

Dijana Alickovic, AIA
Board Member

Ethan Migliori
Board Member

Shaleane Gee, PhD
Board Member

STAFF

Steph Crabtree
Specialist & Bookkeeper

Lindsey Briceno, AIA
Enterprise Rose Architectural Fellow

Grace Whatley
Specialist

Jarod Hamm
Graphic Designer

Judith Trejo & Grissel Gomez
Community Coordinator

NON-PROFIT STATUS

Department of PACT, a 501(c)3 non-profit (2009-2014)
501(c)3 IRS non-profit status (2014-current)
State of Utah Permit for Charitable Solicitations (Current)
Guidestar Seal of Transparency (Current)
Better Business Bureau Accredited Charity (Current)

HONORS

Enterprise Community Partners - *Rose Fellow Host* (2018-20)
Utah Museum of Fine Arts - *ACME Lab Featured Designers* (2018)
Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) - *Epicenter Featured* (2018)
Emery County Business Chamber - *Nonprofit of the Year* (2018, 2015)
Governor Gary Herbert - *Leadership Award* (2015)
Utah Design Arts Exhibit - *Juror's Prize* (2015)
Utah Housing Coalition - *Rural Project of the Year* (2014)
AmeriCorps - *Awarded Vistas & NCCCs* (2010-16)
USDA Rural Development - *Rural Business Enterprise Grant* (2009)

RELEVANT PROJECTS

Epicenter Building (2009-10)
Property Management (2009 - current)
Community Design Projects (2010 - current)
Assessment & Planning (2012 - current)
Habitat for Humanity House (2012)
Fix It First (2012 - current)
Frontier House (2016)

Please see pages 17-19 for project details and ruralandproud.org for more information.





MARIA SYKES

PO Box 441
Green River, UT 84525
(435) 564-3330
maria@ruralandproud.org
ruralandproud.org

EDUCATION

- 2008 Auburn University - *Bachelor of Architecture*
- 2008 Auburn University - *Bachelor of Interior Architecture*

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- 2009 - current ***Executive Director, Co-Founder***
Epicenter | Green River, UT
- 2009 - 2014 ***Board Member***
Habitat for Humanity | Castle Country, UT
- 2008 - 2009 ***Architectural Designer***
Lightroom | Decatur, GA

RELEVANT PROJECTS

- 2009 ***Epicenter Building***
Green River, UT
Epicenter co-founders renovated the building with help from local subcontractors and volunteers. The renovation, funded through a Rural Business Enterprise Grant from USDA and private match, was extensive; major foundation and footing repairs, a new roof and ceiling, new front and rear facades, and much more.
- 2012 ***Habitat for Humanity House***
Green River, UT
In partnership with Habitat for Humanity, Epicenter designed, funded, and built a 1,064 sq. ft. house for a local family. This three bedroom house, located on south Solomon, focused on durability, efficiency, and gathering spaces. Its completion marked a major milestone for Epicenter. The house was also the first Habitat home built in Green River.
- 2012 ***Lightroom 2.0***
Decatur, GA
A mixed-use space, the project contains a storefront modern art gallery, a new office and studio, a residential level with kitchen dining and living area, two bedrooms, and two bathrooms. The rooftop is an outdoor terrace and movie theater that frames the view of Midtown Atlanta and the forests of Druid Hills and Inman Park.





LINDSEY BRICENO, AIA

PO Box 190
Green River, UT 84525
(435) 564-3330
lindsey@ruralandproud.org
ruralandproud.org

EDUCATION

- 2012 University of Kansas - *Master of Architecture*
- 2010 Louisiana Tech University - *Bachelor of Architecture*

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- 2018 - current ***Architectural Rose Fellow***
Epicenter | Green River, UT
- 2012 - 2018 ***Project Manager***
JHP Architecture / Urban Design | Dallas, TX
- 2011 - 2012 ***Project Designer***
Aedas Design Studio | Beijing, China
- 2005 - 2010 ***Project Designer***
Pollard Hodgson Architects | Shreveport, LA

RELEVANT PROJECTS

- 2018 ***Trinity Groves | Phase II***
Dallas, TX
296-unit mixed-use, market rate development with a commercial component on the ground floor. Responsibilities within the project included lead designer, leading the project through the city's permitting process, and project coordination between consultants and construction administration during the construction phase.
- 2017 ***Govalle | ThinkEast Masterplan***
Austin, TX
96-unit affordable development with complex site constraints tied to both tree mitigation and water retention. Responsibilities within the project included lead designer and project manager with oversight on the project's 2-star Green Building Certification through the City of Austin's strict energy efficiency standards.
- 2017 ***Crestview Station | Phase II***
Austin, TX
226-unit market rate development. Responsibilities within the project included designer and project manager leading the project through the city permitting process as well as oversight for the project's Green Building Certification.





STEPH CRABTREE

PO Box 454
Green River, UT 84525
(435) 564-3330
steph@ruralandproud.org
ruralandproud.org

EDUCATION

- 2014 University of Utah - *Master of Architecture*
- 2010 Freie Universitat Berlin, Germany - *Architectural Certificate*

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- 2014 - current ***Housing Specialist, Property Manager, Bookkeeper***
Epicenter | Green River, UT
- 2015 - current ***Lieutenant***
Green River Fire Department | Green River, UT
- 2011 - 2014 ***Architectural Intern***
Eaton Architecture | Salt Lake City, UT
- 2004 - 2008 ***19th Special Forces Group (Airborne)***
Utah Army National Guard

RELEVANT PROJECTS

- 2013 ***Rabbit Ear House***
Design Build Bluff | Navajo Nation, UT
A year-long graduate program at the University of Utah focused on immersing students in hands-on cross-cultural experiences. A group of ten students designed and constructed a house for a family on the Navajo Reservation.
- 2014 ***Nepal Studio***
Bridges Between | Chhulemu, Nepal
In partnership with Bridges Between, a non-profit organization that focuses on educating women and families in rural Nepal, we designed a solar greenhouse for the village of Chhulemu. The studio involved a three week trip to Nepal to manage and document the construction of the project.
- 2014 ***The Core of Ofunato***
Thesis Project | Ofunato, Japan
Master degree thesis project based in post-tsunami Ofunato, Japan. Students spent time in Ofunato addressing how urban planning and architectural design can mitigate the effects of natural disasters.





ROCKY MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT CORP.

64 E. Winchester St, Suite 230
Salt Lake City, UT 84107
(801) 366-0400

26
MEMBER-BANK NETWORK

129
CRA-QUALIFIED LOANS

7,500+
HOUSING UNITS

ORGANIZATION

Rocky Mountain Community Reinvestment Corporation is a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit created and supported by Utah's banking community to increase the access to credit to serve low- and moderate-income communities.

Rocky Mountain CRC provides technical assistance to customers and investors and underwrites, originates, and services commercial loans for affordable housing and community development. Rocky Mountain CRC provides financial products for both nonprofit and for-profit developers and service providers.

RELEVANT PROJECTS

2018 ***Pacific Drive Apartments***
American Fork, UT
\$557,877 financed
26 one-bedroom units
43.6 percent AMI

2018 ***Cedar Bluff Apartments***
Cody, WY
\$550,000 financed
24 mixed units
43.4 percent AMI

2018 ***Valley Meadows***
Tooele, UT
\$1,200,000 financed
32 two-bedroom units
49.7 percent AMI



ROCKY MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT CORP.

64 E. Winchester St, Suite 230
Salt Lake City, UT 84107
(801) 366-0400



DAVID WATKINS, CFO

David Watkins joined Rocky Mountain Community Reinvestment Corporation as its Chief Financial Officer in 2013 following tenures in the same position at Veterans Trading Company. Prior to entering the financing field, David spent six years as a Controller in the department of defense sector. David completed his Bachelor in Accounting from the University of Utah in 2005 and a Master of Accountancy from Westminster College in 2010. David, his wife, and their four children reside in Holladay, Utah.



JOHN MONTGOMERY, CRO

John Montgomery is currently the Chief Risk Officer for Rocky Mountain Community Reinvestment Corporation located in Salt Lake City, Utah. John has over 30 years of commercial real estate finance and management experience including regional loan production management, construction finance/administration, low income housing finance, underwriting, policy development and asset management resolution. Past employers have been primarily First Security Bank / Wells Fargo, Zions Bank, and San Diego National Bank. Loan originations include over \$1 billion in term loan and construction originations. Lending activities have included Commercial Real Estate, Commercial and Industrial, Acquisition and Development, Freddie Mac/Fannie Mae Multifamily, Affordable Housing (LIHTC), Private Activity Bonds (PAB), Commercial Mortgage-Backed Securities (CMBS), and Luxury Mountain Resort. John received his B.S. Finance degree from the University of Utah in 1986. He has received several Mortgage Bankers of America (MBA) and American Banking Association (ABA) certifications.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JASON WHEELER, AIA
BOARD CHAIR

Jason Wheeler is Executive Director of ASSIST Inc Community Design Center in Salt Lake City Utah. Prior to joining ASSIST, Jason worked as an architect at APM Architecture in Omaha, Nebraska, focusing on housing for seniors, historic preservation, and custom home design. From 2010 to 2013, Jason was an Enterprise Rose Architectural Fellow in St. George, Utah, improving the energy efficiency of affordable housing in the desert southwest.

JOSHUA ROWLEY
VICE CHAIR

Originally raised in Green River, Joshua Rowley returned in 2014 to enter a partnership to revitalize the Tamarisk Restaurant into the even more successful business it is today. Prior to returning home, Joshua sought a design degree from Utah State University and worked at the nationally-known 3-Form in Salt Lake City. Ever the business entrepreneur, Joshua opened the unique and successful Skyfall Guestrooms on the Green River in 2016.

RUTH LINFORD
TREASURER

Utah native Ruth Linford received a Bachelor of Arts from Utah State University in 2008 and a Master of Arts: Community Art Education from the University of Texas at Austin (2018). Ruth's nonprofit experience from 2010 to today includes extensive grant writing, financial management, executive directorship, board membership, and resource and program development.

REN HATT, JD
SECRETARY

Green River native Ren Hatt has worked as a legal assistant, research assistant, policy analyst, and more in the Utah Court System, at the Milton A. Kramer Criminal Justice Clinic, and in other medical and law institutions. Upon returning to Green River, Ren began co-managing the family business (Hatt Ranch Inc.) and worked at Epicenter as a Community Coordinator. Ren now works at Green River High School as an educator and continues to co-manage the ranch.

DIJANA ALICKOVIC, AIA
BOARD MEMBER

After receiving a Master of Architecture from the University of Utah, Dijana worked in Salt Lake City as an architectural intern and an AmeriCorps VISTA. Throughout her professional career, Dijana has volunteered with architectural nonprofits and co-founded her own, COMMONstudio. She now works as a licensed architect at AJC Architects in Salt Lake City.

SHALEANE GEE, PhD
BOARD MEMBER

After graduating from the University of Utah, Shaleane received a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Chicago where she was an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellow and a Woodrow Wilson Foundation Fellow. Shealeane was both a lecturer and the Associate Dean of External Relations & Strategic Initiatives at the U of Chicago before returning to Utah to be the Associate Dean of the Colleges of Architecture, Planning, and the Arts at the U of Utah. For four years, Shaleane was the Director of the Mayor's Initiatives as well as the Senior Policy Advisor for Salt Lake County under now US Representative Ben McAdams. Shaleane is now the VP of Community + Regional Development at Zions Bank.

ETHAN MIGLIORI
BOARD MEMBER

Former Emery County Commissioner Ethan Migliori assisted Epicenter in receiving its non-profit status and creating its first strategic plan in 2013-14. Since then, Ethan has sat on the board as a veteran member and was Treasurer from 2014-18. Considered by many to be the best mind for business in Southeastern Utah, Ethan works with small businesses, Utah State University, and the region's Small Business Development Center.



ADVISORS

RHODA STAUFFER

PARK CITY - AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Since the 1990's the Affordable Housing Department of Park City has been working to bring affordable housing to the resort community of Park City. In 1995, Park City adopted its first set of housing policies defining incentives to create and preserve affordable housing. Today, Park City promotes quality housing opportunities for persons of all economic levels as a key element of community sustainability. Park City has developed 497 affordable units (80% rental and 20% owner-occupied), and projects in development will increase this number to 621 over the next five years.

Stauffer has been the Affordable Housing Program Manager for Park City since 2008 and a Principal at RJS Community Development Resources since 2007 where she is a key partner on a state-wide affordable housing initiative Utah Workforce Housing Initiative assisting municipalities and counties to fulfill their moderate-income planning requirements.

BEN RILEY

HASU

The Housing Authority of Southeastern Utah (HASU) incorporated in 1994 and has over 15 years experience in development, construction, and administration of affordable housing programs. HASU is driven to serve the housing needs of low and very low income families in Southeastern Utah.

Since 2010, Ben Riley has been the Executive Director of HASU where he has developed multiple successful housing projects in Moab, Utah, and received and managed complex funding sources such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

ROWE ZWAHLEN

USU EXTENSION

USU Extension provides research-based programs and resources with the goal of improving the lives of individuals, families, and communities throughout Utah. Program areas include: Agriculture and Natural Resources; Gardening; Home, Family, and Food; and Utah 4-H and Youth. The integration of teaching, research, and public service enables USU Extension to respond to critical and emerging issues with research-based, unbiased information.

Rowe Zwahlen is an Extension Assistant Professor currently working in Emery County. He holds a Master of Landscape Architecture degree from the University of New Mexico and a Bachelor of Science degree in Horticulture from Brigham Young University. Before joining USU Extension he worked in the nursery and landscape design industry and has been involved in a number of community planning and design projects.



REFERENCES

MICHELE WEAVER

RURAL COMMUNITY ASST. CORP.

Founded in 1978, Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides training, technical and financial resources, and advocacy so rural communities can achieve their goals and visions. RCAC has an annual operating budget of more than \$15 million and more than 140 employees working from field offices throughout our service region.

Weaver joined RCAC in 2015. As a rural development specialist for housing, she provides technical assistance to housing agencies and organizations. Before joining RCAC, she worked in the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) department for a large community bank. She also is Board Secretary for both the Utah Housing Coalition and the Utah Native American Housing Corporation. Ms. Weaver is a loan committee member for NeighborWorks of Salt Lake and a coordinating committee member of Family Self Sufficiency, a HUD program.

MARK MATEL

ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Creating opportunity through affordable housing in diverse and thriving communities, Enterprise is a proven and powerful national nonprofit, they bring together nationwide know-how, partners, policy leadership, and investment to multiply the impact of local affordable housing development. Established 35 years ago, Enterprise has created nearly 585,000 homes, invested \$43.6 billion, and touched millions of lives.

Matel is the director of the Enterprise Rose Fellowship. Matel was a real estate development project manager at Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation (NCDC) in Roxbury, MA. Mark has earned several distinctions, including Alpha Rho Chi Medal for Service in Architecture, Design Stewardship Award and MACDC's Outstanding Leadership in Community Development 2013. Mark holds a master's degree in architecture from Hampton University and a Master of Design Build from Auburn University.

DAVE CONINE

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(RETIRED)

Dave Conine was appointed USDA Rural Development Director for Utah in September 2009 and recently retired. Prior to joining Rural Development, Dave worked as a Rural Development Specialist for RCAC focusing primarily on community development and affordable housing in rural Utah. During the administration of Utah's Governor Matheson, Dave worked in the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget where he specialized in housing, land use, and agricultural policy. Near the end of Governor Matheson's second term, he served as the Director of Planning and Management for the Utah Department of Agriculture where he planned and helped implement the establishment of conservation programs and a revolving loan fund for value-added agriculture and rural community development. Dave studied architecture at Cooper Union in New York City. His graduate work at the University of Utah was in urban and regional planning. Retired, he now currently serves on several nonprofit housing and arts organization boards.





Corporate Office:
3120 Freeboard Drive, Suite 201
West Sacramento, CA 95691
(916) 447-2854 • Fax (916) 447-2878

November 20, 2019

Conae Black
Green River City Administrator/City Recorder
P.O. Box 620
Green River, Utah 84525

RE: Green River Residential Development Project

Dear Ms. Black,

On behalf of RCAC, we would like to express our strong support for Epicenter's application to the City of Green River for the Residential Development Project. RCAC has worked with Epicenter since its inception over 10 years ago in areas including economic development, organizational capacity building and housing.

Epicenter has been passionate and dedicated in serving Green River and has seen success in housing initially with an award from the Utah Housing Coalition in 2014 for its Fix It First Program and most recently developing and building the Frontier House. Assessing the housing needs from community engagement, surveys and data collection and drawing on the strengths of the architectural expertise on staff, the Frontier House's innovative design was created to have the option of expandability in future builds.

As Epicenter has matured as an organization, they have effectively created partnerships with funding sources that will ensure the success of the Residential Development Project including: USDA Rural Development, HUD, Utah Housing Corporation and Utah's Olene Walker Housing Loan Fund as well as rural focused initiatives in the private sector with American Express, Rocky Mountain CRC, Wells Fargo, Zions Bank and private foundations.

The RCAC housing development team has over 50 years in collective experience developing and partnering multi-family projects in the Western Region and will continue to support Epicenter and the community of Green River in their housing efforts.

It is our belief, that Epicenter is the best entity to develop affordable housing in Green River. Please let me know if there is any other information we can provide that would be helpful. Thank you for your consideration of this recommendation.

Sincerely,

Michele C. Weaver
Rural Development Specialist-Housing & Economic Development



Green River, Utah 460 East Main Street, P.O. Box 620, Green River, Utah, 84525
435-564-3448
cblack@greenriverutah.com

To Conae Black,

I am writing to you today on behalf of Enterprise Community Partners in support of Epicenter's RFP response for development of the City-controlled property into entry-level housing options in Green River, Utah.

At Enterprise we believe that the strongest change agents are those who understand their local community and are the stewards of thoughtful and informed development. Enterprise recently hosted our annual fall retreat in Green River because we believe that Epicenter is a national leader in thoughtful development in rural communities. We brought over 50+ housing experts and community development leaders to Green River to discuss affordable housing issues and to understand the challenges that rural organizations face with development. Our network saw firsthand Epicenter's relationship with the city and local economy and their impact over the last decade.

Through the Rose Fellowship, Enterprise Community Partners has partnered with organizations nationwide to create inclusive, sustainable, community-driven developments. Enterprise has partnered with 81 host organization to design and develop more than 90 community facilities and over 14,000+ units of affordable housing. Enterprise Community Partners has partnered with Epicenter as part of our growing network. We anticipate that Epicenter's decade of knowledge and the only entity taking steps to develop affordable housing in Green River will contribute to the impact of affordable housing in Green River and serve as an example for other rural spaces.

Epicenter, in partnership with Enterprise, has developed a work plan for their Rose Fellow that will:

- Create a regional, rural network to share community development best practices, resources, and lessons learned;
- Nurture local participation in to improve Green River; and
- Expand options for affordable housing.

Enterprise Community Partners believes the plan, executed by the Rose Fellow, stewarded by Epicenter, and enriched by Enterprise's experience and expertise will create a necessary and useful framework for housing development in rural communities. Enterprise Community Partners has been a supporter of Epicenter's work financially since 2016 and has specifically funded the pre-development of multi-family housing. Epicenter operates in one of the smallest communities that we have ever placed a Rose Fellow – which is a testament to the strength of their organization and their vision for positive change in the community.

Enterprise Community Partners are excited to partner with Epicenter and give enthusiastic support to their proposal for the development of the City-controlled property into entry-level housing options in Green River, Utah.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Matel".

Mark Matel
Enterprise Rose Fellowship Director

Dave Conine
1764 East Pioneer Rd
Draper, Utah 84020
801-856-1322
daveconine@gmail.com

November 29, 2019

Conae Black
460 East Main Street
P.O. Box 620
Green River, Utah 84525

Dear Conae:

I'm glad to see you are still actively involved in working for Green River's better future. I have gone through the Residential Development RFP and I commend the Town for taking this important step to increase Green River's supply of affordable housing.

My enthusiastic recommendation of Epicenter for the proposed development is based on their successful implementation of numerous community programs in Green River. One of the first projects we funded during my tenure as USDA's Rural Development Director was Epicenter's renovation of the dilapidated old building that now houses their office. I was initially skeptical about the odds for completing the project within the grant budget but they did it and have gone on to demonstrate how hard work, talent and creativity can reduce project cost.

Epicenter offers unique and significant advantages for Green River's proposed land sale and housing development project. Since Epicenter is a local nonprofit organization, more of the project funds will remain to turn over in the local economy. Reducing the outflow of local dollars is a well-proven rural economic development strategy. Additionally, Epicenter is in an ideal position to hire local labor for the construction of homes. They have already completed two homes in Green River and have repaired and renovated over fifty homes through their Fix-it-First program, many of which have enabled seniors to age in place at home.

Epicenter was selected by Enterprise Community Partners to host an emerging young professional through the Rose Architectural Fellowship. Becoming a host organization is a prestigious acknowledgement of Epicenter's leadership in community design and development by Enterprise Community Partners. Rose Architectural Fellows are recognized in the profession as individuals offering outstanding community planning and design talent.

Epicenter's reputation among private foundation funders as well as state and federal community development agencies will allow them to leverage limited financial resources to make quality housing development affordable for Green River.

I consider the financial assistance provided to Epicenter to be one of the most effective community development investments we made while I served as Rural Development Director. I will be glad to provide any additional information to assist Green River in the RFP selection process.

Sincerely,



Dave Conine

EXPERIENCE

THE BEGINNING



We'd like to think we chose this location, but really this place chose us. Epicenter's founders were invited to work in Green River, Utah, as AmeriCorps volunteers. They stayed because they fell in love with the place, the people, and the possibilities. At the start, the team focused on the immediate housing services that our small team and budget could provide, such as use of our internet, application assistance for social services and housing loans (eg. USDA 502 loans), and connection to housing resources such as local contractors. The ideas of Epicenter's founders eventually became projects and programs which in turn formed the independent nonprofit Epicenter in 2014.

EPICENTER BUILDING (2009-10)

Prior to becoming Epicenter's home office, 180 South Broadway sat vacant for a decade. Built around the turn of the last century, Epicenter's co-founders renovated the building with help from local subcontractors and volunteers. The renovation, funded through a Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) from USDA and private grant match, was extensive: major foundation and footing repairs, a new roof and ceiling, new front and rear facades, and much more. The federal RBEG grant was written and managed by Epicenter. The building now acts as the Epicenter headquarters, housing all day-to-day activities.

\$110,000

PROJECT BUDGET

81%

GOVERNMENT FUNDS

19%

PRIVATE FUNDS

Only 12% of housing units in Green River are rentals.

Green River Housing
Occupancy Assessment (2019)

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT (2009 - current)

With no local housing authority or private property managers in Green River, Epicenter has stepped into the role of property management for various properties over the past ten years. This includes complying with HUD and USDA requirements, local building codes, and more. Experience in property management has given Epicenter unduplicated insight into the community's housing needs, a roster of handymen and subcontractors working in Green River, tenant interaction strategies, and deep understanding of local housing economics. Epicenter has managed multiple privately-owned homes and all of the local government funded apartments in town.



EXPERIENCE

COMMUNITY DESIGN PROJECTS (2010 - current)

Epicenter has executed 50+ arts and design projects in Green River, Utah, and beyond. These projects (typically in collaboration with visiting artists, designers, and architects, and always with the community of Green River) have given Epicenter a deep and critical insight into the community's realities, economics, challenges, and assets. Projects include the welcome sign, events, publications, exhibits, and films.



“[...] many residents are living in sub-standard conditions. Housing options do not exist in Green River.”

**James Wood,
Green River Housing Plan (2012)**

ASSESSMENT & PLANNING (2012 - current)

As Epicenter matured, we soon discovered the specific data necessary to quantify the needs for Green River that didn't exist. We now gather our own data through surveys, focus-groups, windshield surveys, and more in order to truly understand the needs of Green River. The studies/reports include:

- Green River Housing Assessment (2013)
- Green River Housing Plan (2013)
- Mobile Home Survey of Green River (2015)
- Green River Vernacular Housing Study & Best Practices (2015)
- Green River Housing Occupancy Assessment (2019)

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY HOUSE (2012)

The gained experience encouraged us to design and build a house of our own. Still new to the work, we decided to partner with an existing organization that had experience developing new housing in the area: Habitat for Humanity of Castle Country. With their help, we designed, funded, and built a 1,064 sq. ft. house for a local family. This three bedroom house, located on south Solomon, focused on durability, efficiency, and gathering spaces. Its completion marked a major milestone for Epicenter. The house was also the first and only Habitat home built in Green River.



EXPERIENCE

51

TOTAL HOME REPAIRS

2014 RURAL PROJECT OF THE YEAR

UTAH HOUSING COALITION



“It is expected that in the next eight years there will be a total growth of 179 new residents. It is assumed that this is equivalent to about 61 new households.”

James Wood,
Green River Housing Plan (2012)

FIX IT FIRST (2012 - current)

In response to the housing assessment that found 49% of houses in Green River needed repairs, we developed the Fix It First program. Fix It First helps elderly, disabled, and/or moderate- to low-income homeowners improve their home by fixing minor problems before they become major problems. Costs are repaid by the homeowner at a low interest rate and placed back into the revolving loan fund which is used to repair more homes for more families in perpetuity. Along with the micro loan, Epicenter manages each project.

FRONTIER HOUSE (2016)

In rural America, affordable housing options are often limited to inefficient mobile homes (“trailers”) which both depreciate in value and incur high ongoing maintenance costs as they deteriorate. To provide an alternative to trailers, we’ve designed the Frontier House, a model to test an affordable and high-performance single-family housing option for our region. Our first iteration is a 708-square-foot house, scaled to the city’s minimum house size while meeting the needs of those living in trailers.

THE FUTURE

Moving forward, Epicenter has a three-pronged approach to developing housing in Green River: developing rental units, creating clear pathways to homeownership, and expanding Fix It First.

With a staggering 28% of homes in Green River being trailers, Epicenter is determined to provide clear pathways for residents to move out of unstable conditions and into asset-building homeownership. We are developing the Frontier House line and actively seeking new partnerships with other nearby single-family housing developers.

With Fix It First expanding into larger projects, Epicenter will have a greater impact, including rehabilitation of the nearly 15% of housing that currently sits vacant in Green River; these homes can become ready to purchase or rent for low-to-moderate income residents.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DESIGN

Epicenter’s intention for this project is to create a residential community that provides accessible, affordable units that both address the lack of local housing options and respond to our community’s specific needs. In order to achieve this goal, we place our community and our neighbors’ needs at the forefront of the design process.

In addition to being an active part of the Green River community, Epicenter holds both formal meetings and informal conversations with community members regarding housing and local economics. This practice and research has informed the design of this residential community, shaping the size and accessibility of units in a way that allows for ample public space and individual private yards. Epicenter will continue to co-design the project with our community as the project moves forward. We intend to seek community input on the design specifics of the homes, the layout of the community space, the availability of amenities from which the larger community could benefit, and general community ideas and concerns.

DEVELOPMENT TYPE

Canal Commons will provide ten (10) affordable single-family homes, with both rental and owner-occupied options. This project is reflective of both the community’s urgent need for accessible, senior-friendly rental units and a lack of ‘starter homes’ for those seeking homeownership.

The exact mix of rental and ownership units will be determined by Epicenter’s continued conversations with the Green River community. Though the majority of the units will be reserved for rentals, determining the quantity of the owner-occupied properties will depend on identifying residents ready to take the step into ownership. Epicenter believes the option of homeownership is critical to this residential community.

The rental units will be two-bedroom, two-bath reserved to serve the 50% Area Median Income (AMI) or below, with rents at \$750. The owner-occupied units will be a minimum of two-bedroom, two-bath and be for sale less than \$200,000, including the land parcel on which the home sits.

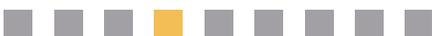
10 UNITS

OWNER-OCCUPIED

< \$200,000

RENTAL

50% AMI



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

HOUSING DESIGN

Vernacular
Energy-Efficient
Accessible
Site-Specific
Durable

With designers at the helm of this project, a tremendous amount of thought will go into the design of this residential development as Epicenter continues to pull cues from community conversations and housing precedence of similar scale. The houses will be vernacular to (ie. specifically designed for) Green River. The development will tie into the existing fabric of the surrounding neighborhoods with significant consideration given to materiality, durability, and energy-efficiency. Accessibility is also a core component to the design of these homes as there are currently no accessible rental units available in Green River. This ongoing lack of accessible rental units has resulted in a growing trend of aging individuals leaving our community in order to find accessible solutions where they can safely age in place.

Epicenter has also selected sustainability as a key component to the project. We want a project that stands the test of time and is not wasteful of materials, land, or energy. Therefore, Epicenter will pursue Enterprise Green Communities Certification, a program that is improving the health and well-being of low-income people by transforming the quality of affordable housing in America. By aligning affordable housing investment strategies with environmentally responsive building practices, Enterprise is leading the national effort to ensure that people living in affordable housing are healthier and spend less money on utilities. Energy efficiency and durability of materials are a key part of design for the reason that reducing monthly utility bills and maintenance costs frees up the limited finances of low- and moderate- income (“LMI”) families and individuals in order to better ensure personal financial stability. Whether they own their home or rent a unit, a durable home will result in low maintenance costs over time, which would help keep these units affordable for the long-term.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

LANDSCAPING + PUBLIC REALM

The unique size and shape of the proposed site allows ample opportunities for enhanced semi-private and public space. This will be achieved through enhancing landscape features to provide functional water mitigation while maintaining connectivity or privacy between units as needed. The preservation and enhancement of the existing grove of cottonwood trees, a significant and historic asset to the site (ie. the original City park), will provide a place of refuge for the development's residents and the community at large. Another unique asset of the site, the irrigation canal, acts as a natural area for a short walking trail or water wise landscaping including pollinator-friendly plants. If we are able to acquire or lease water rights, the canal could be used to supplement for rain during low-water years or allow residents to start a personal and/or community garden. By enhancing existing site assets and better connecting landscape features, there will be a greater sense of community and ownership.

Water mitigation on the proposed site is an issue that Epicenter will combat with creative solutions that are woven into the landscape naturally. Because the flooding issues that occur on this site do not happen frequently, there is an opportunity to plan and design for these occurrences while also doubling as landscape features. For example, the use of open space in the center of this residential development will be designed for use as fields for play and leisure as well as low-lying retention ponds that move the water away from the homes while still allowing access to street frontage. Epicenter's partnership with USU Extension brings in expertise related to these issues.



FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

\$1,491,108

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COST

\$149,111

PER UNIT COST

59.1%

FINANCING SECURED

40.9%

FINANCING EXPECTED

Development Budget			
	Total	Per Unit	% of Total
Sources (Secured)			
Rock Mountain CRC	\$660,054	\$66,005	75.0%
Private Grants	\$61,000	\$6,100	6.9%
Private Donations	\$5,000	\$500	0.6%
Olene Walker Housing Fund	\$154,450	\$15,445	17.5%
Sources (Secured) Total:	\$880,504	\$88,050	59.1%
Sources (Expected)			
Community Development Block Grant	\$200,000	\$20,000	32.8%
Private Grants	\$315,604	\$31,560	21.2%
Private Donations	\$95,000	\$9,500	6.4%
Sources (Expected) Total:	\$610,604	\$61,060	40.9%
Sources Total:	\$1,491,108	\$149,111	100.0%
Uses			
Acquisition Costs	\$0	\$0	0.0%
Site Improvements	\$200,000	\$20,000	13.4%
Hard Costs	\$1,062,600	\$106,260	71.3%
Soft Costs	\$212,746	\$21,275	14.3%
Cost of Construction Debt	\$15,762	\$1,576	1.1%
Uses Total:	\$1,491,108	\$149,111	100.0%

Hard and soft costs for this residential development are lower than the national average while also allowing for mid-grade finishes and durable and energy efficient exterior materials. The majority of the hard debt is being financed through Rocky Mountain CRC, an expert lender in affordable housing development. To make this project affordable for the 50% Area Median Income (AMI) of Green River, there is also a large portion being provided by private donations and grants. Many of the grants that Epicenter has secured for the start of the project are also eligible to be re-applied for annually.

One grant that we can pursue in partnership with the City of Green River to help with infrastructure costs is the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); Jones & Demille, the engineers on our project team, have experience with this grant and will be a great asset in securing these funds.

Though the project's feasibility is not tied to its utilization, Epicenter is also working with USDA Rural Development to increase access to their 502 home loans for Green River residents. In order to better assist local residents in achieving homeownership, Epicenter intends to become a USDA Rural Development loan application packager.



PROJECT TIMELINE



SITE PLAN

- ① PHASE 1
- ② PHASE 2
- ③ WALKING TRAIL
- ④ RETENTION POND
- ⑤ CANAL
- ⑥ COTTONWOOD GROVE



Given local contractor capacity, this proposed 10 unit residential development will need to be built in phases. Phasing will allow 3-5 units to be built at a time, one phase immediately after the other, with a priority for rental units to be completed first as they are currently in highest demand locally. Additionally, by developing rental units first, there is a greater opportunity to identify potential home buyers in the community and provide financial education training to ensure they are equipped with the tools to be successful homeowners.



LAND ACQUISITION

Epicenter is adamant that these housing units are both developed as and remain affordable for Green River residents. Keeping initial costs low provides a greater likelihood that the project will be an asset to the community as a whole, as well as being affordable for Green River's families and individual residents. In order for the project to be as affordable as possible and without eliminating aspects of the project, it is essential that the proposed land be a donation to the project. The City's gift of eliminating the cost of land acquisition gives Epicenter the ability to leverage those savings into lower rents as well as providing on-site amenities to the residents. Site improvements such as water wise landscaping will not only benefit the project's future tenants but they will also benefit the community of Green River through beautifying the area and providing accessible green space.

Maintaining affordability within the project is a long-term priority for all of the units but even more so for the for-sale properties. With the recent rise in conversion of previously affordable homes into nightly rentals (eg. AirBnbs), Epicenter is acutely aware of the need for restrictions that ensure long term affordability once the ownership of the unit is no longer under Epicenter's oversight.

To maintain perpetual affordability and to ensure these units will be the buyer's primary residence, deed restrictions can be placed on the property, initiated at sale. Deed restrictions will both ensure primary residency as well as give homeowners a fair return on their investment, if they ever choose to sell their unit in the future. This will ensure all future homebuyers have fair access to this housing development at an affordable price. The resale price is set by a formula contained in the sale of the property and will be tied to community trends and appraisal value. By design and intent, these deed restrictions preserve the affordability of housing one owner after another, one generation after another, in perpetuity.



Appendix I: Liability Waiver

The information in this RFP is intended to provide general information regarding the development opportunities with the City of Green River. This information is not intended or warranted to be a complete statement of potential development issues and/or procedures to which the developer may be subject, nor is this information intended to be a complete statement of all the information the developer might be required to ultimately submit.

All facts and opinions stated herein and in any additional information provided by the City of Green River, its officers, officials, employees, attorneys, agents, representatives, or its consultants (herein collectively "City"), including but not limited to surveys, statistical and economic data and projections, are based on available information and no representation or warranty is made with respect thereto.

This RFP does not commit the City to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response. The City reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal in part or in its entirety. The City further reserves the right to request and obtain, at no cost to the City, from one or more of the developers who submit proposals, supplementary information may be necessary for the City staff and/or its consultants to analyze the submitted responses to this RFP.

The City reserves the right to issue written notice to all participants of any changes in the proposal submission schedule or other schedules, should the City determine, in its sole and absolute discretion, that such changes are necessary. However, given the uncertainty of Public Record Law, the undersigned hereby waives all rights, releases and holds harmless, the City in case of disclosure, required accidental, or otherwise. The proposing entity, by submitting a response to this RFP, waives all rights to protest or seek any legal remedies whatsoever regarding any aspect of this RFP.



Signature

Maria Sykes, Executive Director
Name and Title

Epicenter
Name of Business

Green River, UT 84525
City/State/Zip Code

(435) 564-3330
Phone



Appendix II: Non-Collusive Affidavit

AFFIDAVIT by Maria Sykes

THAT he/she is the owner or manager of Epicenter, “developer” herein, the part making a proposal for development of the Project, that such proposal is genuine and not collusive or a sham; that developer has not colluded, conspired, connived or agreed, directly or indirectly, to put in a sham proposal or to refrain from proposing, and has not in any manner, directly or indirectly, sought by agreement or collusion or communication or conference, with any person, to fix any term of the proposal or that of any other proposer on the Project to secure any advantage against the City of Green River, and that all statements and information in the proposal are true.

FURTHER, developer hereby certifies under penalty of perjury that neither he/she nor any other person associated therewith in the capacity of owner, partner, director, officer, or manager has been indicted, convicted, or had a civil judgment rendered against it by a court of competent jurisdiction in any matter involving fraud or official misconduct within the past five (5) years.



Signature

Executive Director

Title

12/4/2019

Date

