

# OPIOID ABATEMENT FUNDING REQUEST AND RECOMMENDATION

Recommend    Not Recommend    Modify

Received From: **OPEN ARMS (WOMEN'S) VILLAGE**

Total Funding Request: \$250,000

Total Project Cost: \$747,867.00

Scope of Work Includes:

- Project Administration & Compliance: \$14,063
- Construction Management & Site Operations: \$148,666
- Exterior Building Repairs & Improvements: \$25,084
- Structural, Framing & Building Envelope Work: \$67,407
- Interior Buildout & Finishes: \$118,644
- Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing & Safety: \$245,646
- Contractor Overhead & Builder Fee: \$96,751

## Summary

On October 31, 2025, Open Arms Village (OAV) submitted a request for opioid abatement funding to support capital improvements required to establish a women's transitional recovery housing facility. A site visit and interview were conducted by the Marion County Hospital District (MCHD) on November 7, 2025, to evaluate the project's feasibility, program model, and alignment with the approved uses of opioid abatement funds.

The capital improvement project involves a complete renovation of the facility, including demolition, structural repairs, interior buildout, flooring, finishes, and installation of all new mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire safety, and security systems. No work has begun, and the full project cost of **\$747,867** reflects all remaining construction, safety, and compliance requirements needed to open the women's transitional recovery residence.

Open Arms Village currently operates a low-barrier transitional housing program serving individuals with opioid use disorder (OUD) and co-occurring substance use or mental health conditions. The women's program is designed to replicate OAV's established men's program, which has operated since 2013 and maintains an 82% success rate, as reported by the organization. The new Women's Village will be located on the campus of Compassion United Methodist Church.

The Women's Village will fill a significant gap in Marion County's recovery housing landscape. Existing transitional housing programs for women generally prioritize mothers with children, leaving single women, particularly those exiting rehabilitation facilities or incarceration, with limited sober housing options. This project will provide a structured,

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recovery-oriented environment specifically tailored to women seeking stability and long-term sobriety.

The program model emphasizes accountability, evidence-based behavioral health practices, and the development of life and employment skills. Residents will receive counseling, peer support, case management, relapse-prevention training, and weekly health and wellness programming. Services include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Substance Abuse (CBT-SA), Motivational Interviewing, EMDR therapy, structured case management, and required participation in 12-step recovery activities. Residents complete a comprehensive intake, orientation, and individualized care planning process, reinforcing the program's focus on stability, responsibility, and community engagement.

## Relevant Risk Disclosure

In 2024, OAV experienced a major financial setback due to embezzlement by its former Executive Director, resulting in the loss of capital previously raised for the women's facility. While this loss delayed progress, it did not diminish the critical need for the project or the gap in services it is intended to address within the community. Following this event, OAV strengthened internal financial controls, expanded Board involvement in fiscal oversight, and engaged external accounting support. While these corrective actions have improved accountability, the incident underscores the importance of ongoing monitoring of financial practices and revenue diversification.

## Funding Scope & Sustainability

Open Arms Village currently has no external funding commitments for this capital project. Its operational model characterized by approximately \$4 per-resident daily costs, is sustained through in-kind facility support from St. Mark's Church, community donations, and a volunteer workforce that includes program graduates. OAV intends to replicate this model at the Women's Village.

Open Arms Village submitted a detailed sustainability plan outlining financial oversight procedures, donor development strategies, partnership engagement, and long-term operational planning. The organization details strong financial controls including segregated duties, dual authorization for expenditures, monthly reconciliation with external oversight, and annual CPA review supported by an engaged Board of Directors and an external bookkeeper.

The women's facility will operate within a long-standing, stable property owned by the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church, with OAV responsible only for the leased space. OAV's projected revenue streams include program fees, grants, recurring donors, community partnerships, and fundraising events. While the organization

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anticipates a temporary dip in revenue during leadership transitions and project ramp-up, historical data show average annual revenues exceeding combined projected expenses for the men's and women's programs. Still, the sustainability plan relies heavily on continued community fundraising and donor cultivation, indicating that diversified, predictable revenue sources will be important to long-term operational stability.

### **Recommendation:**

Based on the submitted materials, site visit, and program review, Open Arms Women's Village demonstrates a clear and compelling alignment with the priorities of opioid abatement funding. The project directly addresses a gap in Marion County by expanding transitional, recovery-oriented housing specifically for single women impacted by substance use disorder, opioid use disorder, and co-occurring mental health conditions, an underserved population with limited existing options. OAV's structured, evidence-based program model, combined with its proven organizational experience and exceptionally low operating costs, strengthens the case for this investment and indicates a high likelihood of sustained program success.

Although the requested amount exceeds remaining traditional-housing funds available this fiscal year, consideration should be given to supporting this capital improvement project due to its direct expansion of recovery-focused transitional beds for women, a population with limited dedicated options, and due to the one-time nature of the investment. Completion of these renovations will enable the facility to open by Fall 2026, providing a critical, sustained benefit to the community's opioid response system.

### **OPIOID SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE OUTCOME:**

*On January 8, 2026, the Opioid Settlement Committee convened for its quarterly meeting to review the funding request and recommendation for the Open Arms Women's Village project proposal. The Committee approved funding in the amount of \$250,000. Funding for the Open Arms Women's Village Capital Project is to be contingent upon full funding being secured for the remaining capital improvements, the approved funds being utilized only after all other funding sources have been exhausted, and all vendor payments being made directly to the vendors through the Marion County Hospital District.*