



**HOUSING, JOBS and SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT
THREE YEAR CCO SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLAN
(FY 2025, 2026 and 2027)**

December 31, 2024

I. Background

The [Housing, Jobs and Sustainable Communities Act 2024 Permanent Reauthorization \(HJSCA\)](#) requires the Principal Chief to submit the Council a three year plan to execute the “Sustainable Communities” program, administered by the Community and Cultural Outreach Department (CCO), authorized at \$4 million across fiscal years 2025, 2026 and 2027. This memorandum constitutes that plan for review and comment by the Council for the period prescribed by the Act.

Since its enactment in [2019](#), HJSCA has provided millions of dollars in capital funds for improving, expanding and constructing community buildings and related infrastructure for CCO participating organizations. HJSC was originally funded through general fund revenue for fiscal years 2020, 2021 and portions of 2022, but received a significant boost for the balance of 2022 through 2023 and 2024 through ARPA funding authorized in the [2022 reauthorization of HJSCA](#).¹

¹ The 2022 reauthorization of HJSCA authorized the Sustainable Communities program at \$7 million through fiscal year 2025. However, additional funds were committed to community building projects under the umbrella [Respond, Recover and Rebuild Plan](#), under various council resolutions. The Administration's practice, effectively codified in the 2024 HJSCA permanent reauthorization, is to deem every community building capital project as falling under CCO's programs.

HJSCA CCO Sustainable Communities Three Year Plan (FY 25, 26 and 27)

HJSCA investments in community buildings to date have been either directed by CCO or coordinated by that department in coordination with either Natural Resources or Facilities Management. All of these investments, however, fall under the “sustainable communities” administered by CCO. From inception through the end of FY 2024 there have been 246 unique sustainable communities projects across a range of scales with total expenditures approximating \$35,647,353.² As discussed below there are presently over \$14 million in sustainable community capital projects already authorized.

Significantly, major projects remain planned and funded under the 2022 HJSCA authorization. These *existing* projects, to be completed by the end of calendar year 2026, include:

Illinois River Area Community Organization Community Building

Tahlequah, OK

New CCO Community Building

Adair County Genealogy & Historical Society Community Building

Stilwell, OK

New CCO Community Building

Greasy Community Building

Stilwell, OK

New CCO Community Building

Southern Cherokee Helpers Community Building

Warner, OK

New CCO Community Building

Loyal Shawnee Community Building

White Oak, OK

New CCO Community Building

North Tulsa Cherokee Community Organization Community Building

Tulsa, OK

New CCO Community Building

Washington County Cherokee Association Community Building

Ochelata, OK

CCO Community Building Remodel

Cherokee Cultural Center

Dewey, OK

CCO Community Building Remodel

² The community center components of the Kenwood and Marble City projects were \$4.8 million and \$10 million, respectively, and are included in the total expenditures since inception.

HJSCA CCO Sustainable Communities Three Year Plan (FY 25, 26 and 27)

These projects alone reflect an investment of approximately \$14,007,083, bringing the grand total of Sustainable Community investment under HJSCA to \$49,654,436 since HJSCA's 2019 inception.³ In as much as the above projects fall under the 2022 ARPA funded HJSCA, those projects are not included in this three year plan called for by the 2024 permanent reauthorization of HJSCA. Yet, understanding the full depth and breadth of HJSCA expenditure provides vital context to developing and underusing the three year plan discussed herein.

The 2024 permanent reauthorization of HJSCA puts the Nation on a perpetual path to build, repair remodel and otherwise enhance community buildings across the Cherokee Nation using the authorized \$4 million for "CCO Sustainable Community" projects across three year cycles. These future investments, against the backdrop of over five years of historic investment in Cherokee Communities, can help usher in positive generational change for the Cherokee people, their communities and our culture, heritage and traditions.

II. Three Year CCO Sustainable Communities Plan

CCO's Sustainable Communities three year plan must contemplate more major capital projects, empowering grass roots organizations to share in identifying those projects and include an investment in future planning. The plan keeps in focus the need to build and improve community buildings with the objective of sustaining Cherokee culture, heritage and traditions.

This three year plan balances the Nation's interests in putting planning and execution of community projects in the hands of grass roots community organizers with the Nation's interest in professionally managing large scale projects.⁴ This requires that even on large projects, such as the construction of new community buildings, consultation with the local CCO participating organization.

This balanced approach presupposes that projects will be managed by Cherokee Nation with direct government expenditures on the project, but

³ To the extent the investment in community building infrastructure exceeds the amounts authorized under predecessor HJSCA enactments, such funding was authorized under the Respond, Recover and Rebuild Plan and is categorized as part of HJSCA.

⁴ Prior to 2019 the norm for community building projects was to provide a grant of funds to the CCO participating organization, affording the organization substantial control over all phases of design and construction. The enactment of HJSCA increased capital investment for community buildings exponentially. Projects became more complex, with greater attention to safety and security elements. Consequently, since 2019 Cherokee Nation has taken more control over major projects.

HJSCA CCO Sustainable Communities Three Year Plan (FY 25, 26 and 27)

without bypassing the local organization in the area of planning and development. It also requires that, where projects are manageable, the local organization is fully empowered to plan and execute on a project through a grant.

Beyond collaborating with community organizations on specific capital projects, the three year plan contemplates opportunities to more broadly plan with community organizations. Funding in this three year cycle on master planning and needs assessments can help inform implementation of the current plan as well as development of the next plan.

Based on the foregoing principles and objectives, the inaugural HJSCA CCO Sustainable Communities Three Year Plan is as follows:

- **\$4.5 million: Sustainable Communities Major Projects (New / Replacement and Major Remodels of Community Buildings)**
 - CCO will continually evaluate opportunities for major capital projects across the reservation based on:
 - Community readiness and
 - Relative lack of access to existing facilities to sustain Cherokee community life.
 - Includes land acquisition and supportive infrastructure.
 - At present, in random rather than priority order, the following sites are candidates for major capital construction.

Evening Shade Community Building

Vian, OK

New CCO Community Building

Association of Ottawa County Cherokees

Fairland, OK

New CCO Community Building

Center 64 Community Building (formerly Vian Peace Center)

Vian, OK

CCO Community Building Remodel

Old Saline Cherokee Association

Locust Grove, OK

New CCO Community Building

No-we-ta Cherokee Community Organization

Nowata, OK

CCO Community Building Remodel

Oak Hill – Piney Community Organization

Oak Hill – Piney, OK

HJSCA CCO Sustainable Communities Three Year Plan (FY 25, 26 and 27)

New CCO Community Building
Jay Cherokee Community Organization
Jay, OK
New CCO Community Building
Lower Illinois Cherokee Connection
Gore, OK
New CCO Community Building
Cherokees for Black Indian History Preservation
Tahlequah, OK
New CCO Community Building
Native American Fellowship, Inc.
Muldrow, OK
CCO Community Building Remodel
Muldrow Cherokee Association
Muldrow, OK
CCO Community Building Remodel

It is unlikely that the funds allocated under this Three Year Plan will be sufficient to fund all of these projects. As planning and development of these projects continues it will likely be necessary to amend this plan and submit it to the Council for an additional period of review and comment.

- **\$1.5 million: Sustainable Communities Annual Projects (Grants to CCO organizations for facility medium size capital projects such as remodels, equipment upgrades and other improvements)**
 - CCO will make Sustainable Community grants or funding available to all CCO participating organizations on an annual basis, at approximately \$500,000 per year.
 - Sustainable Community proposals will address building remodel, equipment or other infrastructure needs within the meaning of HJSCA, ie, projects which promote “cultural, social or environmental sustainability.”
 - Includes land acquisition and supportive infrastructure.
 - CCO will determine, on a case by case basis whether the proposal warrants a grant of funds to the requesting CCO participating organization or whether direct expenditure by Cherokee Nation is warranted.

HJSCA CCO Sustainable Communities Three Year Plan (FY 25, 26 and 27)

- **\$250k: Community Building Master Planning / Needs Assessments**
 - CCO will engage CCO participating organizations with opportunities to conduct need assessments and master planning for community buildings / community building campuses.
- **\$200k: Contingency Reserve**
 - CCO will maintain a reserve, not to exceed \$200,000 for emergency repairs to community buildings operated by CCO participating organizations.
 - CCO will maintain this balance by reallocating funds from Sustainable Communities Major Projects and Sustainable Communities Major Project funds.

HJSCA CCO Sustainable Communities Three Year Plan (FY 25, 26 and 27)

Recommended:

Sheila Bowlin, Secretary of State

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Sheila Bowlin

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Canaan Duncan, Deputy Secretary of State

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Canaan Duncan

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Savannah Smith, Director of CCO

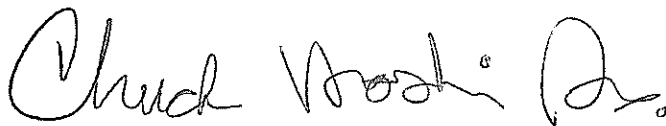
Signed by:

Savannah Smith

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Approved for Submission to the Council of the Cherokee Nation, December 31, 2024



Chuck Hoskin, Jr.

Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation