



Request for Proposals:

Climate Housing Workgroup “CHOW” Facilitator

Virginia Conservation Network (VCN) is seeking an experienced facilitator and policy professional to support the second year of the Climate and Housing Workgroup (CHOW), a cross-sector cohort bringing together advocates doing state-level work from the housing and environmental communities to break down silos and build collaboration between the two movements.

The selected consultant will facilitate the cohort’s second year of working together. The first year was focused on relationship-building, shared learning, and level setting. The goal of Year 2 is to identify areas of alignment and develop a list of shared policy principles that the cohort can work together to advance in coming Virginia General Assembly sessions. We recognize that the group may not reach full alignment on every issue, and that complete consensus is not the only measure of success. A successful year 2 would also include clearer areas of agreement, a better understanding of tensions, and stronger relationships that enable organizations to communicate directly before and when challenges arise. The consultant should have experience facilitating diverse coalitions and a baseline understanding of housing and environmental/ climate advocacy issues. Ideally, the consultant is especially familiar with how these issues intersect in the context of state-level policy.

The selected consultant must be available to attend and facilitate all scheduled in-person CHOW meetings in Virginia. VCN can provide reimbursement for reasonable travel expenses associated with required in-person meetings.

Proposal deadline: Wednesday, 11/11/2026

For any questions or to submit a proposal, please contact:
Brittney Beazley, Director of Operations and Fundraising
brittney@vcnva.org

About Virginia Conservation Network and Housing Opportunities Made Equal of VA

Founded as the Conservation Council of Virginia in 1969, Virginia Conservation Network (VCN) began as a roundtable of major conservation groups and has grown to include over 170 Network Partners across the Commonwealth. VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth’s natural resources. VCN is a facilitator of strategic action, a resource for Network Partners statewide, and a constant conservation presence in Virginia’s Capitol. Playing a unique role in Virginia’s conservation community, VCN helps the community speak with one coordinated voice. The organization and its staff focus on strengthening the conservation community as a whole and winning environmental victories that benefit all Virginians.

Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc. (HOME) is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and a HUD-approved housing counseling agency. HOME was born out of the necessity to enforce the Fair Housing Act. As long as discriminatory practices prevent access to housing, we will be here to protect the rights of all Virginians. We tackle systemically divisive housing practices through fair housing enforcement, research, advocacy, and statewide policy work. We also aid first-time homebuyers and those under the threat of foreclosure. When unequal access to housing and credit contributes most to our growing wealth gap, our multi-faceted approach is a powerful catalyst toward furthering fair housing.

This project will be overseen by the CHOW planning committee: Fatima Kamara, VCN's Land Use & Transportation Manager, Laura Dobbs, HOME's Director of Policy, Jessica Sims, VCN's Executive Director, Lillian Anderson, VCN's Director of Energy Programs, and Tom Tom Okuda Fitzpatrick, HOME's Executive Director.

About the Climate and Housing Workgroup (CHOW)

Virginia continues to face both an urgent housing crisis and an urgent climate crisis. These issues are deeply connected; where and how housing is built affects energy use, transportation patterns and fossil fuel consumption, tree canopy, flood risk, affordability, and long-term community health outcomes. New housing can be a powerful climate solution when built densely, efficiently, affordably, and with access to clean energy and transportation options. At the same time, policy conversations around housing and climate have too often created tension between advocates who should be working together.

The Climate Housing Working Group Cohort (CHOW) was created to address a key movement gap. Climate/environmental advocates and housing justice advocates often work toward overlapping long-term goals, but not always with shared language, relationships, or a clear understanding of each other's policy priorities and constraints. In Virginia, these movements most frequently interact by responding to legislation and sometimes find themselves on opposite sides of a bill, without the opportunity for deeper relationship-building or shared consensus outside of the fast-paced General Assembly session. This project creates the space and structure for advocates to step out of a reactive state and into a longer-term, trust-based process. During year 1, CHOW brought together 24 advocates from 12 organizations for six virtual education sessions, a two-day in-person retreat with site visits, and two half-day in-person meetings. The first year was focused on building relationships, developing shared language, and creating space for participants to better understand one another's work. The next phase of Year 2 will build on that foundation by helping the cohort move toward more trusted conversations about areas of alignment and potential shared principles that can support both housing justice and climate and environmental goals.

Scope of Work

The selected consultant will work closely with the CHOW Planning Committee to design and facilitate the second year of the cohort.

The consultant should bring both strong facilitation skills and familiarity with housing and environmental and/or climate advocacy so they can help participants navigate complex policy conversations, identify areas of agreement and divergence, and move discussions toward productive next steps.

The scope may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Year 2 Design and Planning

Work with the CHOW Planning Committee to refine the Year 2 cohort timeline, benchmark goals, and facilitation approach based on lessons learned during Year 1 and the ideal outcome of a consensus policy principles document.

This may include:

- Reviewing relevant Year 1 materials, reports, participant feedback, and meeting notes.
- Participating in planning meetings with the CHOW Planning Committee.
- Helping translate the goals of Year 2 into a practical meeting and facilitation structure.
- Recommending and leading approaches to consensus-building around policy discussions.
- Helping identify when additional subject-matter expertise or outside speakers may strengthen cohort discussions.

2. Meeting Facilitation to Identify Areas of Alignment

Facilitate conversations that identify current areas of alignment and opportunities for greater alignment, while navigating and respecting misalignments.

- Work with the Planning Committee to craft meeting agendas that build toward a developed list of shared policy principles by the end of year 2.
- Act as a neutral facilitator for virtual meetings and in-person convenings to identify existing alignment, opportunities for consensus, and misalignment.
- Work to build cohort consensus wherever possible.

The facilitator should be comfortable helping a group work through differences in priorities, constituencies, strategies, or policy positions while maintaining a collaborative, productive environment.

- Ensure participants across sectors and organizations are able to contribute equally and meaningfully, and feel their perspectives are heard.
- Adapt the facilitation approach as the cohort's needs evolve.
- From March - September 2027, we anticipate four in-person engagements, two virtual sessions, and ad hoc one-on-one check-ins with participants. This is subject to change depending on the facilitation plan created by the consultant and the Planning Committee.

Reasonable travel expenses associated with required in-person meetings in Virginia are to be reimbursed.

3. Working Towards Shared Principles & Plan for Collaboration

Moving beyond alignment to guide the cohort in creating a shared principles document and forward-looking plan for collaboratively advocating for those principles. Throughout the process, work towards the goal of:

- Developing shared policy principles or values around how Virginia can meet its housing needs while also advancing climate goals.
- Facilitating honest, trusting conversations about policy tradeoffs.
- Naming opportunities for further cross-sector collaboration.
- Developing recommendations for continued work together beyond the grant period.

4. Documentation and Recommendations

Work with the Planning Committee to capture key outcomes from the process.

Deliverables may include:

- Brief meeting summaries or facilitation notes
- Documentation of areas of agreement, divergence, and questions requiring additional discussion
- Draft shared principles or other cohort-developed materials
- Recommendations for continued collaboration following year 2

Deliverables

Expectations for selected consultant include:

- Project kickoff meeting with CHOW Planning Committee
- Review of relevant year 1 CHOW materials and lessons learned
- Participation in ongoing planning meetings with the CHOW Planning Committee
- Development of agendas and facilitation plans for cohort meetings
- Facilitation of agreed-upon virtual meetings
- In-person attendance and facilitation of all scheduled CHOW meetings held in VA
- Identifying and documenting areas of alignment, divergence, and shared principles.
- Possible policy memoranda for legislators

Project Timeline

RFP Released: 10/19/2026

Proposals due: 11/11/2026

Consultant selected: 11/18/2026

Project kickoff: December 2026

Planning/ Preparation: December 2026 - March 2027

Potential Cohort Meetings: In-person gatherings in March/April, June, July, and September. Virtual meetings in May and August.

Final Deliverables/ Project Wrap:

*Applicants must confirm their availability to complete the project within this timeline and attend required in-person meetings in Virginia

Proposals Submission Requirements

Proposals should include:

- Relevant experience facilitating coalitions, cohorts, consensus building, and/or collaborative policy processes.
- Relevant experience with housing advocacy and environmental and/or climate advocacy. Experience working at the intersection of these issues at the state policy level is strongly preferred.
- Experience facilitating groups with different perspectives, priorities, or policy positions.
- Experience with nonprofit, advocacy, coalition-based, or similar organizations.
- Proposed approach and work plan with timeline.
- Proposed project fee schedule.
- Description of key staff who would work on this project.

- Three references from past clients.
- Commitment to equity and inclusion, including experience creating inclusive spaces where participants with different backgrounds, perspectives, and levels of power can meaningfully participate.
- Confirmation of availability and willingness to travel to Virginia for required in-person CHOW meetings.
- Any anticipated travel needs or expenses associated with in-person meetings.

VCN values consultants who bring a thoughtful, practical, and collaborative approach. We are seeking someone who understands the unique nature of cross-sector coalition work and can help advocates move through complex policy conversations while maintaining the relationships and trust necessary for long-term collaboration.

Budget

VCN has allocated \$23,000 for this project. Please include your proposed project fee in your submission. Reasonable travel expenses associated with required in-person meetings in Virginia are to be reimbursed. Applicants should identify any estimated travel costs or needs in their proposal.

Submission Instructions

Please submit proposals via email to Brittney Beazley, Director of Operations & Fundraising, at brittney@vcnva.org. Please include “CHOW Facilitation RFP” in the subject line.

Proposal deadline: November 11th, 2026